

cinema canada

#41

\$1



Outrageous: three views
Mike Rubbo/Robin Spry/Ousama Rawi



Credits not deemed to be contractual

Mario Kassar and Andrew Vajna
present
A Joel B. Michaels, Garth H. Drabinsky, Stephen Young
production

starring Elliott Gould
Christopher Plummer
Susannah York
in

Directed by Daryl Duke
Screenplay by Curtis Hanson
Original Score by Oscar Peterson

Director of photography Billy Williams B.S.C.

Executive Producer Garth H. Drabinsky
Produced by Joel B. Michaels and Stephen Young

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TORONTO FILM SOCIETY

AUG 30 1978

Cover: Robin (Craig Russell) and Liza (Hollis McLaren) dance the night away at the Jack Rabbit Club in New York. See article on **Outrageous**, p. 17.

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TORONTO
FILM
SOCIETY

by
Natalie Edwards

August 1978

Festivals Galore!

In the next issue of Cinema Canada, the great festival round-up. Articles on the World Film Festival, the Festival of Festivals, and the Ninth Canadian Student Film Festival...

REVERB

Inalienable Right to Sell Out

I would like to compliment Don Kerr for his lucid piece on the Pay-TV situation in Saskatchewan. However, I think the problem is more complex than he explained in his informative article.

I must skip over the questionable licensing practices of the CRTC in this case. I think the issue was political and the CRTC felt the co-ops were under provincial control and the private companies were licensed to balance provincial and federal power.

The basic stated objective of the Saskatchewan co-ops and government is highly laudable. They want more and better local programming. I think Saskatchewan's case is very strong, and it could expect national support from many people if it weren't for the fact that Saskatchewan has sold out its Pay-TV system to New York before it is set up.

Saskatchewan has arrived at the same conclusion regarding Pay-TV as the private enterprise cable consortium Pay Television Network Ltd., and they are adopting the same methods. Namely, the co-ops plan to attract subscribers with American movies and then slip them some community and other Canadian programming on the side. The Sask. system goes even further than PTN by offering several American channels, while PTN didn't dare suggest more than one — at least at the start.

The extent of American domination of Saskatchewan's Pay-TV system was made clear in Leo Courville's Pay-TV Report for Sask Tel dated July 21, 1976. It is clear that the Canadian content of all six channels will be less than 50% and the movie channels will be almost exclusively American. Furthermore, I understand that the provincial government has already signed a contract with Telemation Program Services in New York to supply these movies. This same group (a subsidiary of Home Box Office and Time Inc.), also provided much of the information for Courville's report.

It would seem that the same people who fight heart and soul against CBC-NFB visiting firemen (who are a legitimate problem), find nothing wrong with turning over their regional Pay-TV system to travelling salesmen from New York.

Also, Don Kerr refers to the provincial levy which will raise production funds that may reach \$700,000 in five years. What will the production budgets be like in the first few years? The viewers will have the choice between first run Hollywood movies and a community channel with a total annual budget of less than \$200,000 for the entire province. Some choice! Even the 15% national levy Madame Sauvé once mentioned is discredited as hopelessly inadequate. PTN raised their ante to 25% at the CRTC hearings. Finally, I wonder how much money will be spent buying Hollywood movies,

compared to the amount spent on community production?

While the Saskatchewan government exercises every Canadian's inalienable right to sell out to the United States, Premier Blakeney is quoted in the *Toronto Star* as saying, "Canada must develop a distinct economy and culture separate from the United States or else the country's future is in jeopardy" (Sept. 1, 1977). However, no rhetoric can hide the fact that Saskatchewan's sell-out of its proposed Pay-TV system is worse than a disgrace, it's a catastrophe.

Kirwan Cox
Toronto, Ont.

Fetchingly Surreal

To start off equal, Doug, I too have made an unusual effort to see Canadian films. To sit through them at all costs, not to fall asleep with the filmmaker right in the same room (as was almost the case when Michael Snow screened his newest feature, with an absurdly long title and an even more absurd 4 hours of experimental camera work, for a group of film students at York University in 1975). Even to the point of standing half frozen in a movie theatre lineup on one of Ottawa's bitterest winter nights to see **The Far Shore**. And I was richly rewarded in that case when I left the theatre feeling warm and happy that such a fine film should be a Canadian one yet.

I mean, it got a little corny during the last 20 minutes... the classic Hollywood-style Mountie chasing his man through the underbrush was a little much and came at a time when they should have been rolling credits. And perhaps the story of Thomson's life was romanticised, spruced up as it were. But unless you have it in for romantics, canvas art, Tom Thomson and the Canadian North all at the same time, I don't see how you could have been so completely disappointed with Wieland's piece. And if you *are* negative on all those things, don't ever show up at one of my parties! I can't be bothered with a critic who plants himself outside of everything and then tries to "criticize" anything from a supposedly "objective" point of view. His point of view is being on the outside.

I also get impatient with what I call the dutiful Social Worker syndrome. People who can't stand to see a foot of celluloid wasted on mere entertainment, a little fantasy or a rose-tinted world for the benefit of office-weary audiences. If it isn't an outright documentary on the shabby way in which society treats Queen Street bums, they say, then at least the film has to have some redeeming social value. But they don't want us to get caught up in the fetching surreal beauty of all that northern scenery, or dwell on the

erotic possibilities of a cool, secluded lake in the middle of nowhere/Ontario... doesn't say anything. Well, maybe not to you...

But it did speak to me. I am, you see, exactly what you describe (accuse) the elite Toronto creative community to be. I live in the city by need, not choice. I was born in a city and have never been given the opportunity to get out and stay out. I have experienced the North briefly, and I have fantasized about it a great deal more. I love what it really is as much as what I think it to be in my mind on those interminable drives home through steamy rush hour traffic. I am a romantic and not ashamed or guilty about it. That is, I am not a closet nature freak. To imagine that life could be better Out There, more sensual, more pure, more artistic, does not startle me into glancing nervously around at the dozens of winos (Sudbury mining veterans, all of them, I'm sure!) littering College & Spadina.

If I won the million and were to make movies, *they* would not be the subject of my camera. No, I want either a reality I can learn something from, or a good double scoop of fantasy.

So what if the North, as portrayed by Wieland, isn't the real mosquito-swarming, toe-stubbing North that you seem to have in your head (presumably as you speed along the parkway outside rush hours)? So what if the people never existed, if they never spoke in such a civilized way in Ontario half a century ago? I'm sure John Ford didn't go for accuracy in his many interesting portrayals of the Wild West; Bergman tried to pin down his country's social history in **The Virgin Spring**, but he didn't altogether succeed either ...

Wieland's "drooling, syrupy, self-indulgent Portrait of the Artist as a Young Suck" as you call it, was the first film that gave me a colorful insight into the life of one of Canada's best known artists — something I never got in school, even university where I studied visual arts — and which aroused my interest in our painters. I was inspired to take brush and paint to the woods myself and discover the quiet which generates ideas. I have never known another syrupy, self-indulgent film (like **Paperback Hero**) to have any of these effects on me. (By the way, I went to see this film with a man, maybe even a man's man, and though we laughed about the last scenes, we were both touched.)

If "the greatest strength of a narrative film is to offer intimate glimpses into the lives of complete strangers", then surely **The Far Shore**, which offers a lesson about the life of a great painter, is completely valid, quite apart from its cinematic beauty. Artists are usually greater strangers to us than any "normal" person. Even the ones we think we know.

REVERB

I agree that an "artist's redeeming worth is to get at some of the softness and warmth and love that hide in silence beneath the hard shells we have to assume every day" – and this is what the film is showing us. That Eulalie can find a way to express her true nature, although what a struggle it must have been in that social climate with that tight-ass husband! And that the husband does attempt a reconciliation of spirits with his wife although he can't even get close to her source.

In fact, the theme is one of a reconciliation that has always been a major struggle in this country – between the city, civilized counterpart of the Olde Country, and the North: it is so vast in Canada, almost an exotic temptation to city dwellers all over the world. This approach-avoidance conflict is a good place to start creating a "revitalized vision of ourselves".

Just wanted to let you know what I thought, and thanks for listening.

Ellen Dechesne

Experimental Films, Ignored

Canadian Film Awards

N.A. Taylor, Chairman

175 Bloor Street East

Toronto, Ontario

I have become very concerned that the Experimental Category for the Canadian Film Awards has been dropped, ignored and disregarded this year.

Does this mean that experimental films are not valid as authentic Canadian films or does this mean that the Canadian 'industry' is trying to discourage experimentation in filmmaking?

Are experimental films bad for Canada or do they indicate a negative direction in the 'art' of filmmaking? The awards entry from this year itself purports that the "... purpose is to stimulate artistic creativity...".

Perhaps experimental films are anti-Canadian content, if one would dare to define this phrase. I still don't understand it. Of course experimental films don't encourage foreign investment, but I personally find it very sad and quite disturbing that Canada, well known for its experimental films through the work of Norman McLaren, Michael Snow, David Rimmer..., refuses to recognize the fact that experimental films are being made within its boundaries.

The independent experimental filmmaker should not be ignored. He is not unimportant. Experimental film is film, and respectable people in the film industry should perhaps reconsider their 'bad' feelings towards certain types of filmmaking. Otherwise, the Canadian film industry should be viewed as running, jumping, and standing still.

Lois Siegel

Independent Experimental Filmmaker
Montreal

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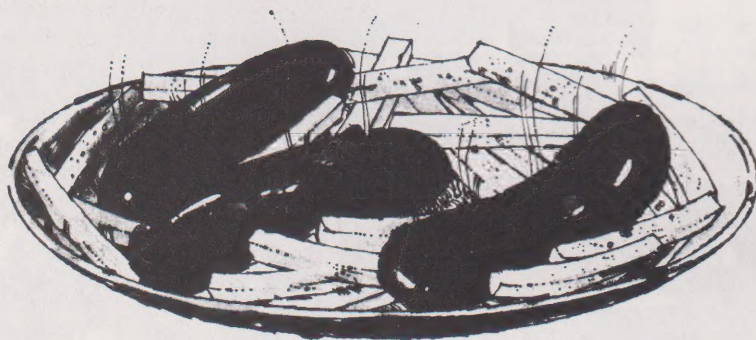
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Charles Champlin
L.A. Times CALENDAR
November 28, 1976

"... Not only did that last reel include some of the most wildly exciting fight footage ever put on the screen, but it also provided an emotionally gratifying capstone to a picture that is truly an ode to the human spirit... And a final word must be said for James Crabe's incredible camera work—not only his stunning views of Philadelphia's historic monuments, but the squalor of the South Philadelphia slums, two breath-taking swoops up the broad steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum, a protracted run past swinging sides of beef in a meat-packing plant, and, of course, the virtuoso photography of the climactic bout... In many ways, ROCKY is a picture that should make movie history."

Arthur Knight
The Hollywood Reporter
November 5, 1976

Camera Operator Garrett Brown, inventor of the system, is seen using the STEADICAM stabilized camera system to film the dramatic fight sequence in ROCKY. James Crabe was Director of Photography.



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Film Policy?

"No news is good news."

Old proverb

THE ILLUSTRATED NEWS

THE WEATHER

Unmentionable

Vol. 1, no. 7

Melzack Shoots (From the Hip)

Julian Melzack paused during the shoot of **Tomorrow Never Comes** to talk. He underlined again his desire to go on making films which will find a large foreign market, and seemed perplexed about the reception he has gotten from some quarters — especially from ACTRA — recently.

Melzack, president of Classic Film Industries, has officially cancelled the production of **Restless**, one of the projects he has nursed for well over a year. And he and director Peter Collinson are off to the States after this shoot to look for locations for **The Limey**, a film once scheduled for production in Canada.

"I was not making idle threats," stated Melzack, referring to a press conference he had given in Toronto Sept. 11. Though the expressed purpose of the conference was to announce Classic's new association with Télé-Métropole, the discussion quickly turned to the

tough demands which ACTRA was making on producers who want to make films which qualify for the 100% Capital Cost Allowance. Melzack claims that these demands will result in un-marketable films.

Melzack believes he is in a strong position. "I'm able to fund a picture without using tax money. I like to use it because it's profitable, but I don't have to use it. I spent from January to March travelling all around the world, getting enough money together so that I now have a revolving fund that I can keep putting into movies. These sums are from private people and from private banks in Switzerland and Iran. So I don't have to make Canadian movies anymore."

Meanwhile, the shoot of **Tomorrow** goes on, under what are becoming nearly impossible conditions. The script called for a torrid summer's day, a day on which a hostage is taken

and held in a cabana down by the river. The relentless rain and cold have prolonged the hostage incident. It now lasts well into the night. Luckily, though, it has been raining in Montreal for weeks, the nights are clear and the moon is bright and the autumn leaves are not too apparent.

If ever Melzack was to move to California, he should have started with **Tomorrow Never Comes**.

Connie Tadros

B.C. Film Boss

In a recent issue we announced that the B.C. government was looking for someone to fill the position of Film Coordinator. Well, they have found their man. He is Victoria born Wolfgang Richter, who was officially installed in early August.

Richter, 32, will coordinate the development and promotion of film and television production in British Columbia, filling a post similar to those in a couple of other provinces (namely rivals Alberta and Ontario).

His task will be, among other things, to attract national and international film and TV productions to "beautiful B.C.". The provinces' variety of locations and good (?) weather would probably sell itself, but film producers seem to appreciate the official welcome and administrative assistance that provincial film officials can provide.

Richter, "Wolfie" as he is known to friends, assisted Denis Héroux on the 1976 Cinevideo (Montreal) co-production of **The Uncanny**. Prior to that he worked with COJO as deputy chief of the Sports Information Centre at the Olympic Village and, with the National Film Board in Ottawa as an educational media consultant.

His objective in the new post is, he says, "to stimulate film production in B.C. in any way possible except with money (grants)." He was feeling good the day we talked to him because he'd had a phone call from a producer shooting in Alberta who was considering alternative locations because it had, apparently, been raining there for three weeks.

Whatever the reasons producers might choose the province, their presence should be beneficial to B.C.ers. It'll mean more work for local film people and a financial boost to those communities where the productions locate.

When Canafax moved into Lillooet earlier this summer to shoot **Flashback**, starring Yves Montand, the Lillooetans enthusiastically provided lunches for the crew, and in other ways made them welcome. After only three weeks of "putting up with the filmmakers" as one editorialist put it, the community had received a \$100,000 shot in the arm.

It's that kind of experience that probably motivated B.C. Secretary and Minister of Travel Industry Grace McCarthy's long awaited decision to go ahead with the appointment.

We wish Mr. Richter good hunting.

Joan Irving



photo: Lois Siegel

Melzack during a break for lunch

CAMU TO HEAD CRTC

A small but vocal ruckus ensued after Pierre Camu was named head of the CRTC. Although Camu's background is in maritime industries, it was pointed out that for the past four years he has been chief lobbyist for the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, — the very group he will now oversee as CRTC Chairman. Many said it was like letting the fox into the chicken coop. Others said, throw him out, including the Canadian Consumers' Association. Of course the broadcasters and cable people were happy; now they can all get down to business with a businessman. Camu himself put down the complaints as all wrong; he said it was his job to represent the broadcasters, but could switch hats the same way a lawyer can when he's appointed a judge.

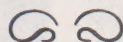
Camu also said that his goals are to improve the CRTC administration operation, and insure a healthy industry via CRTC and the new Communications law; and therein lies the real threat.

The new law moves policy from the CRTC, a regulating body, to cabinet, under Communications Minister Sauvé especially. The Government has been trying to control the media, and the new law is seen as a means to achieve this end. Boyle fought the law and Sauvé, but he's gone now. Camu is a greater threat.

Camu's background in maritime work is more significant than his lobbying, although the lobbying is a natural outgrowth of his previous experience.

He was a professor and headed up the St. Lawrence Seaway, and also worked as a government bureaucrat. He went to school with Pierre Juneau and Maurice Sauvé, whose wife is now Communications minister.

There are few senior men in Canada with the government connections and loyalty to the existing régime that Camu has now, so while there may be cries in the wilderness that he will favor the broadcasters, it's more likely that he will follow the Liberal Government, and that's more ominous.



Govt. Tidbits

Another CBC show has raised hackles. **The Tar Sands**, a film on how the foreign oil interests played on Premier Peter Lougheed's loyalty to his Albertan constituency and obtained a too-favorable deal in the Syncrude formation, brought Lougheed's wrath down on the CBC, and the Premier threatened a lawsuit. Unlike most observers, who felt the treatment was favorable and respectful, Lougheed felt he was ridiculed by the show. Not too much is expected by the CBC from the Premier, because if he did sue, the Corporation could subpoena all sorts of information it needed to back up its case, and much of the information may be embarrassing and/or too revealing... Co-incidentally, despite myriad threats of lawsuits arising out of the CBC show **Connections**, a blunt examination of organised crime, not one lawsuit has materialised.

Who was that Masked Man Department: You may remember about a year ago that a Vancouver based film company announced co-production plans

with several foreign companies. Ashling Multi-Media was involved in **Equus** and planned further ventures but wasn't heard from. Head of Ashling was a man named Kennedy. You may also have read recently of a purported IRA terrorist under deportation examination by the Feds in Vancouver. Man also named Kennedy. Same guy.

Ted Rouse, the Toronto office rep for the past five years, has left the corporation to open his own film consulting business.

His goal is to act as a consultant to producing and creative people, as well as money interests, and to provide a service to an inexperienced and young industry. Ultimately he can go any which way, he says, from representing investors in a particular project, to bringing various interests together.

In the short run, until the CFDC's mandate is altered by SOS Roberts, Ken Rosenberg and Denise Mulvey will be sharing Rouse's duties in the Toronto office.

CBC Presents

Horse Latitudes, The Peter Rowe film shot last year, was finally shown by the CBC in September. The problem was running time; despite re-editing attempts, only a 45-minute length was suitable, and that's hard to fit in a TV schedule. So **Lies**, about the filming of **Lies My Father Told Me**, was run back to back with **Horse Latitudes**, and an hour and a half resulted...

Don Shebib's CBC-directed film **The Fighting Men** was broadcast September 24. A parable on the French-English co-existence in the country, it concerns two armed forces personnel who crash in the lower Arctic. Pic was produced by John Trent and written by Tony Sheer, with Stan Colbert as executive producer and Vic Sarin as cameraman. Cast included Allan Royal, Robert Lalonde and Mavor Moore... **Arts Cuba**, a one-hour documentary about artistic life in Cuba today, has been picked up by the CBC for Fall broadcast. It was directed by Claude Jutra and produced by Vivienne Leebosh. DOP was Henri Fiks and sound was by Aeryl Weissman. Filmed last January, it was premiered in August at the Canadian Embassy in Cuba and was shown at Toronto's Festival of Festivals.

Last year CBC drama called expatriate writer Charles Dennis in L.A. and asked for contribution. He sent **The Alchemist of Cecil Street**, a comedy based on Ben Johnson's **The Alche-**



Barry Morse

mist, but set in Toronto's Jewish area in the '20's.

Just three days before rehearsal for the tape effort was to begin, it was cancelled. Director Michael Lindsay-Hogg had replaced George Bloomfield and was set to go. Eon Sprott no longer was producer. Barry Morse had been signed to star, and would have to be paid. But Dennis was asked to re-write the lead for another ethnic type when Barry Morse was cast.

Hirsch said that there weren't enough adequate Jewish actors in Canada, and furthermore that Morse couldn't play a Jew. Dennis pointed out that recently Eli Wallach and Anne Jackson had played Italians for the CBC, and several actors were named as being both Jewish and adequate by various others.

Dennis is waiting for the new regime.

Stephen Chesley

Moreland-Latchford in Receivership

One of Canada's largest short film houses, Moreland-Latchford, is officially in bankruptcy, and the company's assets are up for sale by tender.

Those assets include 357 16mm films, 346 35mm sound trips, 587 Super 8 loops and 51 incomplete films. The library cost about \$3.5 million to produce.

Reasons for the final decision were insolvency of the company's U.S. distributor, along with cutbacks in educational spending. About a year ago the staff roster was trimmed by half, and things were obviously shaky. The end is now at hand.

Moreland-Latchford tried at one time to become an industrial film supplier, but soon decided that the American educational market offered greater possibilities. They tailored their films for that market, even though they were located in Canada. They also found it troublesome to retain top creative people because of low salaries and lack of individual activity. But they also gave a start to some of Canada's most successful short filmmakers.



ODDS & ENDS



Loren and Vernon in *Angela*

Henry Mancini has done the score for Classic Films' *Angela*, and it looks like Warner Brothers will distribute... A Donnelly script by Murray Markowitz and Leonard Yakir has been novelised... Claude Fournier and Don Thompson have directed episodes of *The New Avengers*... Harry Rasky is working on a film about the Peking Man... Claude Jutra directed two *Beachcombers* and then moved into *Seer was Here*, a CBC *For the Record* series film. All the former were Vancouver-based...

John Bassett bought the rights to Richard Rohmer's *Separation*, and a \$300,000 TV film will be shot in Toronto at CFTO studios in November. Writer is Sandy Stern and director is George McGowan...

ACTRA has published the fourth edition of its *Face to Face with Talent*. It's greatly expanded, especially in representation from the West. 1580 members are now included. 2500 copies were printed and are available to casting agencies and producers... *Film Canadiana*, 1976-77 edition, has been published by the Canadian Film Institute. A detailed assembly of statistics, addresses, bibliographies and descriptions to outline activities in the Canadian Film world, this edition was prepared by Marg Clarkson and Piers Handling. Introductions are by the Film Archives Sam Kula and by Jean-Pierre Bastien of the Cinémathèque québécoise. It sells for \$14.95, and can be obtained from the CFI, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa.

The Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre in Toronto received a \$2000 Wintario grant for office and screening room

equipment... The Toronto Filmmakers' Co-op continues to grow and expand. Dues have been raised to \$75 annually for individuals and \$150 for companies. A mixing room is now set up, and workshops to be run this winter will feature smaller numbers in each group, and higher fees.



Dyan Cannon in *Child*

Foreign sales: *Child Under a Leaf*, the George Bloomfield feature seen about three years ago, has been sold to Britain's Ember Group for distribution there. They'll name it *Love Child*... The CBC has sold *Jalna* to the Persian Gulf States... And the Corporation hosted 150 foreign TV buyers in Toronto and Montreal during the last week in September; sellers include the CBC, and Australian and British TV producers...

People: Ann Ditchburn, of Canada's National Ballet, was chosen to play the lead in John Avildsen's (*Rocky*) new picture to shoot in New York in September. It's about a modern dancer and it's called *Slow Dance in the City*. Just two days into the shoot, Avildsen was fired... Grahame Woods, longtime CBC cameraman, writer and director, has a novel being published this Fall. It's called *Bloody Harvest*, and is about a World War II soldier who has trouble adjusting to civilian life.

Films On The Move

Homage to Chagall by Harry Rasky for the CBC won a Special Jury Award at the San Francisco International Film Festival in the Fine Arts Category... Rasky received the Film Advisory Board Award in Los Angeles for his outstanding achievement in film and TV production over the years... *Chagall* will open this Fall in select U.S. cities, and will preem in Israel on October 29, with *Chagall* there. Canadian run begins via Famous Players in eight cities, starting on October 20 in Toronto.

On Man will have been shown at ten Festivals by this Fall, and more are scheduled... *Shoot* will be shown at the Chicago Festival, and was seen at the Taorima Fest... *The Disappearance* and *Full Circle* were at the San Sebastian Fest in September... **J.A. Martin** will also be seen at the Chicago Fest...

A Canadian Film Season, the best of the past three years, will be held at the National Film Theatre, London, and Canadians Robin Spry, Silvio Narizzano, Gilles Carle, and Monique Mercure will be in attendance. Screenings are set for September 26 - October 7. To be shown are, **J.A. Martin**, *photographe*, *La Tête de Normande St-Onge*, *Second Wind*, *Parlez-nous d'amour*, *Gina*, *One Man*, *Et du fils*, *Bar salon*, *Why Shoot the Teacher*, *Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort*, *Le grand film ordinaire*, *Il était une fois dans l'est*, *The Mourning Suit*, *Montreal Main*, *Le temps d'une chasse*, *Ti-cul Tougas*, *Wolfpen Principle*, *La tendresse ordinaire*, *The Hard Part Begins* and *The Rubber Gun*.

From November 9 to the 22nd, a panorama of Canadian Film programs will be held in Tokyo, Japan. Four programs will be screened: a McLaren retrospective, an animation program, a feature selection and a documentary program. Historical, as well as current films, are included. The program may also be held in Rome next year.



The Rubber Gun

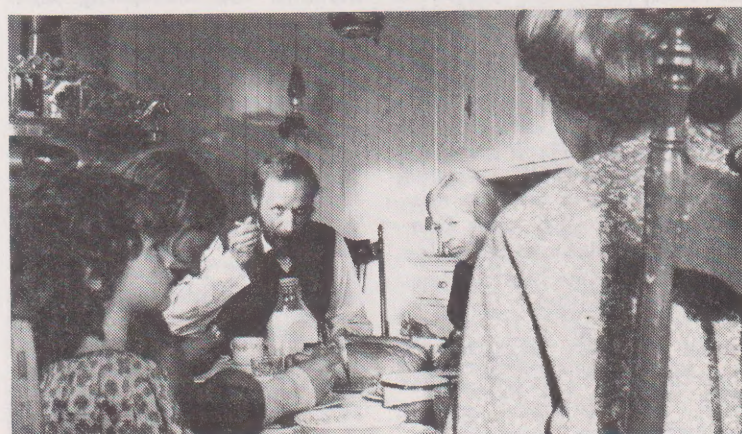
At the Arnhem Holland Fest in November will be *The Rubber Gun*, *Ethnocide*, *One Man*... Also in November is the Nyon Festival, and Canadian participants include *15 novembre*, *Potters at Work*, *Raison d'être*,



The crew on *Potters*

Mad Canadian, *Un canadien en Bretagne*, *Le retour à la terre* and *l'Invasion*... In September several Canadian films were shown at the Kranj Short Film Fest. *Potters at Work*, *Thanksgiving*, *Magic of Animation*, *Enemy Alien*, *L'invasion*, *Mad Canadian*, *Le paysagiste*, *Life Times Nine*, and *Bridge at Electrical Storm* were included.

Stephen Chesley



The silence of dinner in J.A. Martin

releases releases releases releases releases

Why Shoot the Teacher continues to do remarkable business. It has grossed \$800,000 by mid-September, and still has many cities left to play. It has been sold to France, Sweden, Germany and Australia. American distributors feel the asking price is too high right now, so no one has optioned it for U.S. exposure yet.

Other openings: **Homage to Chagall: The Colors of Love**, the CBC-Harry Rasky film that won raves in New York, will open in major American centres throughout the Fall... **That's Country**, the music compilation film by Henning-Jacobsen Productions, had its preem on September 15 at the Hyland Theatre in Halifax, with narrator Lorne Greene in attendance... **Outrageous** preems in Canada at Toronto's Odeon York on September 30, and distributor New Cinema plans forty prints in circulation through the Fall, all in Odeon Theatres. It's now playing to good business in several American cities... **Deadly Harvest**, Tony Kramreither's production, will open this Fall... **The Uncanny**, a Cinévidéo-Tor co-production opened in French in Montreal in mid-September, and will open in English in Toronto in early October...

J.A. Martin photographe, the NFB feature directed by Jean Beaudin that created a stir in Cannes, opened in Toronto in

September. Much of the impetus for a quick release came due to its enthusiastic reception at Toronto's Festival of Festivals. New Cinema is distributing in English Canada... Another NFB winner, Robin Spry's **One Man**, may also be released quickly because of general enthusiasm, and again the distributor will probably be Linda Beath's New Cinema. In Quebec it was rushed out in a dubbed version only because France Film pushed and offered to promote it. Such receptions have prompted word that the Board may resume making features, despite a proclaimed opposite policy.

Who has Seen the Wind will premiere in Arcola (where it was shot) on October 20, and will open in Regina and Saskatoon on the 21st. A November 4 Toronto opening has been set. The film is among only fourteen features invited to the Paris International Film Festival in November.

The Ontario Film Theatre hosted composer Miklos Rozsa for three days in September. He was here to conduct the Hamilton Philharmonic. Three features that he scored - **El Cid**, **Lost Weekend** and **Providence** - were shown, and he talked to the audience... The Art Gallery of Ontario and the National Film Board have joined forces to present three programs by Independent Filmmakers. The series will be shown at the Gallery and then go on tour.

The Art Gallery of Ontario continues to provide an active showcase for films, and this Fall's program includes twenty-three films with the theme

'French Society', three evenings of Canadian shorts, a showing of the official Annecy Animation Festival compilation film, an evening devoted to independent British filmmaking, a program of the best of the Ann Arbor Festival and a series utilising live action, video and film about the dance.

Famous Players has announced a new policy for its long-suffering Toronto Dominion Cinema in Toronto. In what is a test case for other centres, the Cinema will schedule four week runs of pre-releases of hot

movies. The first three are **Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man**, **Equus**, and **Turning Point**. Seats will be reserved and obtainable in advance from selected outlets and will be five dollars each. No line-ups, no popcorn, and thus a more 'theatre' type evening. The Cinema is located in a prime dinner and theatre area of the city, but off the beaten track for regular movie-going. Famous hopes to play up its strengths (including superb equipment and appointments) and circumvent its weaknesses, for the theatre has been virtually empty since it opened. One show nightly will be the policy. After a run is completed, the film will immediately go into regular first-run release.

Toronto Prod.

Paul Lynch's feature **Blood and Guts** wound principal photography near Toronto in late September. It's a \$750,000 feature about small town circuit wrestling. Producer is Peter O'Brien and John Hunter is co-producer. Executive producer is David Perlmutter.

The film was written by Hunter, Joseph McBride and Bill Gray. Gray is also editing. DOP is Mark Irwin and Karen Hazard did the casting.

William Smith (known for his contract killer role in *Rich Man Poor Man*, plays an aging wrestler whose troupe is kept out of the right locations by the villain, a rival promoter played by announcer John McFadgen. Brian Clarke plays a new member of the troupe, a potential star, that the villain covets. Added to the complications are *The Girl*, played by Micheline Lanctôt. Various Southern Ontario wrestlers appear in the film which was shot in the small towns with the intention of implying the Southern U.S.

It's an Independent Pictures in association with Quadrant Films.

Murray Markowitz will direct and produce **I Miss You Hugs and Kisses**, in Toronto beginning October 3rd.

The \$1.7 million feature is a disguised version of the celebrated Demeter killing in Toronto, wherein a wealthy industrialist was convicted of arranging for the murder of his wife. Turned out she had thought of killing him too.

Cast includes Elke Summer, Donald Pilon, Chuck Shamata, Cec Linder and George Touliatis. Producers are Murray and Chuck Markowitz, and Murray wrote the film with Graham Woods. DOP is Don Milder and production manager is Sally Dundas.

The shoot will last six weeks. No commitment from the CFDC at press time.



Cushing and Milland in *The Uncanny*



Murray Markowitz

...The... Festivals

The bi-annual Yorkton Film Festival, running in October, has announced further programming along with its regular short film screenings and competition.

A two-day film conference will run October 14 and 15, and on October 15 a Trade Day for Canadian Filmmakers will be held from 9 am-5 pm. The NFB and CFI will be there, and Canadian writers are invited to share ideas with Canadian filmmakers.

The conference will be two-fold. Creative matters will be discussed by Evelyn Cherry, John Lumby, Bob Verral and Tom Radford. And Making a Living will be discussed by Mickey Stevenson of Astral, Jerry McNabb of the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, Allan Palmer of the NFB Media Research Division, exhibitor Hector Ross, producer Larry Hertzog, Don Ferguson of the CBC, producer Fil Fraser, James Henry of the Australian Film Commission, Dale Philips of Film-West and Cinema Canada's Connie Tados.

This year's Canadian Film Awards, due to pre-select the first week in October, will be held November 20 at the Convention Centre, Harbour Castle Hilton Hotel, in Toronto. A one-hour CBC broadcast will be carried at 10 pm, to be produced by Don Brown of the Arts and Science Division.

Nominations will be announced one month in advance, and at our press date, public screenings had not been finalised. By mid-September 107 features and shorts had been entered,



Carole Laure in Carle's latest

including several sub-titled French Canadian entries, among them Gilles Carle's latest feature.

There will be two secret ballots. First four nominees are to be named in each category of craft and film. Then final winners will be chosen. Each member group of the Film Awards committee has two reps, and in addition there are regional reps to judge; no person who worked on a film can vote in his particular craft category.

This year there will be no Golden Reel Award.

No French-Canadian film awards will be held this year, even though provision was made for two separate events.

The National Association of Educational Broadcasters in the U.S. announced its annual awards, and Ontario's educational TV came up with seventeen, the second highest total of any outlet.

Five awards went to Dick Derhodge, OEGA Graphics Design manager, and five to John Randle, a staff graphic designer. Other awards went to staffers Mike Maynard, Joyce Cosby, Tom Pilsworth and Ross Gray, and free-lancers Alex Pondi and Peggi Heath.

In all, 969 entries were up for consideration. The presentation will be in Washington in November.

The Festival of the Americas will be held November 11-20 in the U.S. Virgin Islands. There will be a film competition, film market, job placement service, director's seminars and screenings in 16 and 35mm, shorts and features for TV and big screens. Write Box 7789 St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, 00801... October 1st is the deadline for the U.S. Commercial Festival to be held in Chicago November 17. Write 1008 Bellwood Avenue, Bellwood, Illinois, 60104. Fest has low and high budget divisions and 68 entry categories.

December 31 is the deadline for entries for the 50th Academy Awards. Write 8949 Wilshire Boulevard, Beverly Hills 90211, or call (213) 278 8990... The 6th International Short and Documentary Film Festival is set for December 5-11 in Lille, France. Shorts under 58 minutes and any length documentaries are eligible, whether in 16 or 35 mm. Write 16 bis, rue Lauriston 75016 Paris.

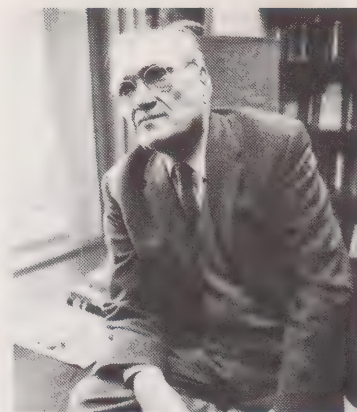
appointments

John Kennedy is now officially named as **John Hirsch's** replacement as Head of TV Drama at the CBC. Kennedy is 39 and a native Torontonion. He joined the CBC in 1959 and has remained there since. Hirsch will be a part-time consultant and, he hopes, will produce and direct as well. **Robin Chetwynd**



Robin Chetwynd

has been named President of Chetwynd Films of Toronto. **Arthur** and **Marjorie Chetwynd**, who founded the industrial filmmaking company, will retain their positions as Chairman of the Board and Secretary-Treasurer respectively. Robin was Executive Vice-President. **Sandra Gathercole** is currently working on a major project for the CRTC. She is editing the previously unavailable taped conversations of **John Grierson**,



John Grierson

conversations that have been a part of CRTC archives up to now. **Joy Cohnstaedt** is the new Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Arts Board; she was Assistant Director of the Cultural Activities Branch of the Saskatchewan Department of Culture and Youth.

George Finstad, an announcer and host (of *Marketplace*) for the CBC, has left the Corporation after fourteen years. He's joined the Standard Broadcasting Montreal radio outlet CJAD as chief news person. He can freelance, too, as well as performing his daily chores of writing, reading and supervising the news operation from 6:00 am to noon... **Gord Martineau** was the anchorman for Toronto's CFTO TV local news until August, when he left for Montreal and more dollars. Now he's back, as host of the CITY TV evening news show *Citypulse*.

Innocents to China Again

Michael Spencer of the CFDC, writer Ted Allen and producer John Kemeny are off to China in early October to try and persuade the Chinese to allow shooting on location for Kemeny's \$10 million feature on Beethune. Without this permission, Kemeny will not be able to go ahead with the production.

Kemeny wants the Government to invest \$3 million in the film as a special project, and so will probably need cabinet approval. For other money, he's looking towards institutions.



Michael Spencer

Feature Projects

David Cronenberg will direct **The Brood**, his latest screenplay, for Elgin Films and Cinepix in Toronto in October. Executive Producer is Victor Solnicki and line producer will probably be John Dunning. Budget is \$800,000... Jon Slan plans to shoot **P.F. Flyer** starring Peter Fonda in November near Toronto. Peter Carter will direct and Mark Irwin is DOP. American International will distribute in the U.S. It's a trucking pic... Dennis Zahoruk hopes for a go-ahead for his low budget thriller **Evil Eye** this Fall or winter. Elgin will produce....

Joyce Weiland and Judy Steed have forsaken their nationalist/feminist stance for **The Diviners**, and hired U.S. scripter (Alice's Restaurant) Venable Hendon to do the screenplay. Production is now set for next Spring with Eric Till co-directing with Steed the \$2.2 million pic... Gilles Carle may direct **The Incredible Mrs. Chadwick** for Classic Film Industries... Ivan Reitman has moved his National Lampoon feature to L.A. where it will be shot in October for Universal. He tried unsuccessfully to get the University of Toronto as a location, but it was too racy for them... **Stuntman**, the Peter Rowe feature, has been postponed to next Spring. Just as the money was all there, they lost the weather, so production was moved back... Syd Banks is putting together a musical feature for René Simard and Zablatini.



Genevieve coming back?

An Italian-Canadian Co-production, **Operation Ogro**, will be shot outside Toronto in February. It's about the assassination of the Spanish Prime Minister by Basque guerillas three years ago, and Pontecorvo wants Donald Sutherland and Genevieve Bujold involved. Somerville House of Montreal is the Canadian co-producer; it was involved in funding **The Odessa File**, **The Klansmen** and **The Story of O...** Meanwhile, Sutherland has set up a production company, and has several features in the works; he may appear in one, at least. That's a Bethune feature to be done with Rod Stewart. They want Pontecorvo to direct: "He's the most human political filmmaker I know," says Sutherland. U.S. writer Michael Alaimo will script it. Another Sutherland project, **A Man, a Woman and a Bank**, written by Canadians Bruce Evans and Reynold Gideon, will be shot in L.A. or Vancouver.

Canawest Closes

One of the west coast's biggest and best known film production companies, Canawest Films, is scheduled to close at the end of this year.

Canawest is a subsidiary of KVOS-TV which broadcasts out of Bellingham, Washington. Due to the economic pressure the border station is experiencing as a result of the passing of Bill C-58, the management has decided to reduce costs. The expendable item is Canawest, which receives an annual subsidy from the station.

Ten full-time production staff have been given their notice, as have another ten KVOS(BC) employees.

Executive in Charge of Production, Roy Burns, claims that many advertisers have had their work done locally because Canawest was here. He fears that

now many of them will go to Toronto rather than 10 other local producers.

Canawest has full in-house production and has produced more than a thousand commercials, industrial films and cartoons since it opened in 1967. Free-lance filmmakers, especially animators, will be hit hard by the closure.

The irony of the situation is that KVOS-TV will survive the effects of Bill C-58 by offering its advertisers a cost reduction and eliminating its Canadian subsidiary.

Burns says that there has been an offer to purchase the company's facilities, including its studio, but no agreement has been reached yet. If that deal falls through there is a possibility that various departments may be sold.

Gray Kyles

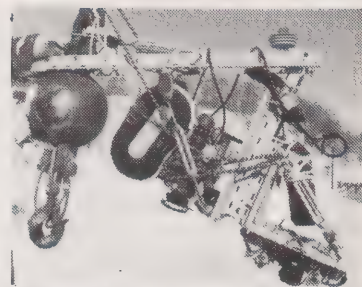
A MAGICAL SHOOT

John Watson and Pen Denshan's Insight Productions has been working on a television special about magic for almost two years and the result **The World of Wizards** can be seen on CBC October 8 at 8:00 P.M.

One of the literally death defying segments of the film was covered by multiple cameras. Director of photography Mark Irwin explains the set up.

"I had just finished almost five months on a science fiction feature called **Alien Encounter** and I was ready for anything new but when John and Pen had me take an oath of secrecy, I began to wonder. It turned out that what they had planned was on the borderline between illegality and suicide. They wanted to suspend a masked, straight-jacketed, Houdini-style escape artist by his heels from a cable over the Horseshoe Falls of Niagara and film his escape from as many angles as possible. Sounded straightforward enough except for the minor details; it was now February, 20 below zero, the Niagara Parks police gave us one hour to set up and shoot, arouse no crowd, allow no publicity, cover it with five cameras, including one bird's eye view over the heels of the escapist and bring it all back - footage and subject - intact.

"Bob New, Bob Brooks, Pen and myself were to operate from various positions: Bob Brooks from another crane over the falls, Bob New from a 30-foot-thick slab of ice and snow below the falls, Pen and I from the edge of the falls and then the rigged camera for the "over heel" shot. I constructed the mount itself from Dexion angle iron, plywood, turnbuckles, bolts and shock cords and set the camera, an Arri M with an Angenieux 5.9, on a wedge plate for quick framing. A Nikon with a motor drive fitted onto another shelf on the unit. At 6:30 a.m. with bare knuckles at 29 below, it clamped onto the ball as solid as a block of ice. Everything worked as planned until I saw the masked escapist. His foot rig (from which he would be inverted over the eighth frozen Wonder of the World) consisted of an iron bar and two seat belt buckles that held his ankles in place. 'Good for up to 600 pounds! CSA approved! Done it a million times!', he pointed out as he swung upside down and out over the Falls. 'Maybe so,' I thought,



The cameras



The wizard



The bird's eye



The finale

'but one good jolt from a flying camera and you'll have to escape from the past tense!'

"Despite the subzero breeze and all my confidence, I began sweating. I watched on the long end of a 12-240 zoom as he wriggled and bounced and dangled while the camera, like a pendulum, did the same.

"Well, to cut a long ending down to size, the escapist escaped, the rig remained rigged and the footage was a knockout, so much so that we lowered the camera, minus passenger, three more times along the spillway and down into the falls. The ultimate in point of view shots, a perfect ending for a one shot, do or die set up."

Super Symposium on Film Ed

The best symposium on film education I ever attended took place at the American Film Institute West in Beverly Hills during the last two weeks of July, 1977.

AFI's Center for Advanced Film Studies is open to selected graduates of other film departments of U.S. universities and other talented individuals, whatever that formulation might suggest. The school does not offer any degree or diploma, yet it is so popular that hundreds of applicants are turned away every year.

The main purpose of the seminar was to show to twenty-eight American and seven Canadian film educators the Center's approach to teaching film and its organization. One of their advantages is the astonishing number of famous guests every year: Henry Fonda, G.C. Scott, Liv Ullman, Fellini, Bergman, Hitchcock, Forman, Bertolucci and others. Another noteworthy subject is the school's strict specialization. The fellows are trained to produce thirty-minute dramatic films only. Do not forget, it is Hollywood. In other parts of the USA and Canada we have to spend more time and effort on various genres: documentaries, sponsored films, etc., because this is the area with potential jobs for our graduates.

During the first year – Curriculum Program – each directing fellow has to produce one videotaped dramatic story. The best students – usually not more than 15 – are then selected for the second year Conservatory Program. Projects approved by faculty will then get \$10,000 for production and up to \$2,000 for post-production. One of the recent student films was Oscar winning **In the Region of Ice** by Peter Werner and Andre Gutfreund, a film screened at this year's Montreal Film Festival.

Apart from getting acquainted with the structure and content of the Center's directing, production management, script writing and other classes, some of us had the opportunity to attend the taping or shooting of shows such as *Maude*, *MASH*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Gong Show* and others. The efficiency of the writing team, crew and cast – one *MASH* program is shot in 3½ days – was amazing. Side trips to Panavision and Lee Strasberg's last class at the Actor's Studio West were the highlights of our extended stay.

However controversial some of the guests to our symposium – or their theories – might have been, their presentations and following discussions were perhaps the

most valuable experiences of the entire two-week program. We met Charlton Heston, talked about directing and acting with Rouben Mamoulian (**Queen Christina** and the excellent, now almost unknown musical comedy **Love Me Tonight**, 1932), Peter Bogdanovich (**The Last Picture Show**), Robert Wise (**West Side Story**, **Sound of Music**), Milton Katselas (**40 Carats**, **Report to the Commissioner**), Jan Kadar (**Shop on Main Street**, **Adrift**), Alexander Mackendrick (**Man in the White Suit**) and Frank Mouris (Oscar for **Frank Film** – best animation) who will become a Fellow in the fall, 1977.

The seminar was conducted in Greystone Mansion overlooking Los Angeles. The place has two priceless features: a 19-million-gallon water reservoir under the parking lot (think of the water shortage in California!) and the most remarkable piece of furniture in the history of motion pictures – a sofa with worn brocade that seated the most famous behinds of film stars and creators during their visits to the American Film Institute West.

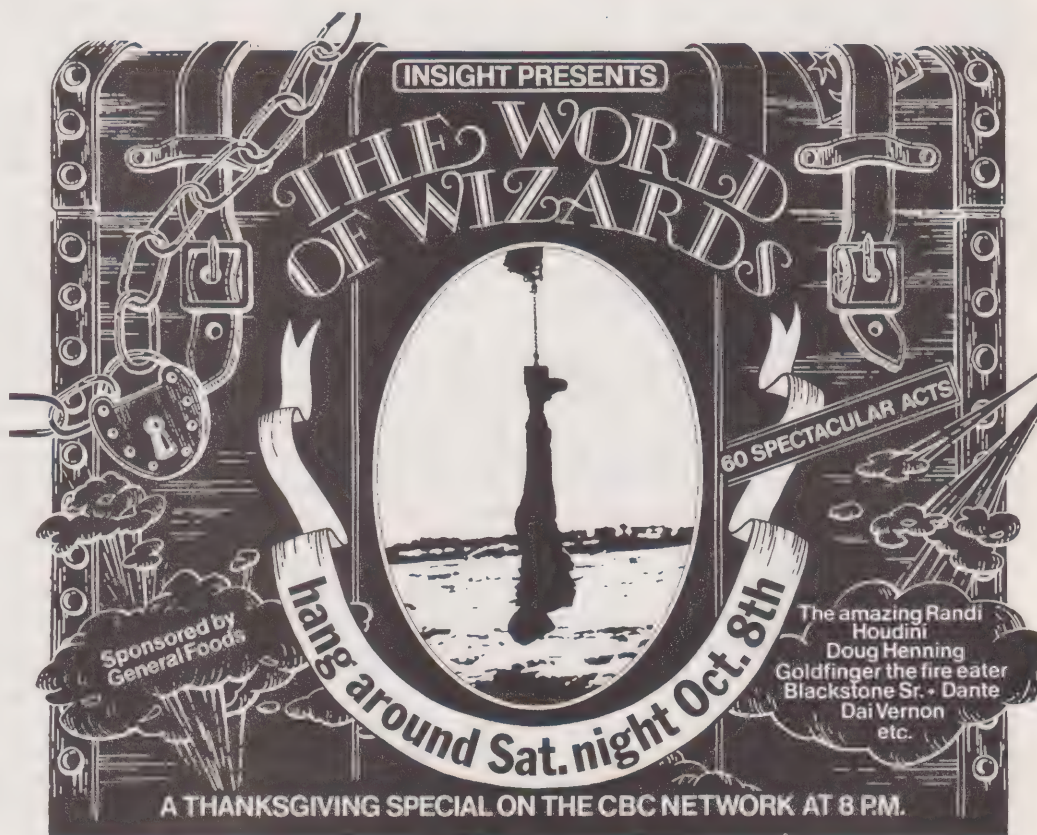
Vaclav Taborsky

N.Y. Screenings

Three CFI New York Screenings for independent filmmakers took place last year. The following films received offers for distribution from American companies: **Where Timber Wolves Call** by Tommy Tompkins, Wildlife Films, Birch Wynd, B.C., **I'm the Same As Everyone Else** by Tony Douglas Associates, Toronto and **An Ounce of Prevention** by Harvard Productions, Regina.

The CFI screenings will continue this fall, and filmmakers with finished productions who are looking for U.S. distributors should contact Harris Kirshenbaum, Canadian Film Institute, 303 Richmond Rd., Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 6X3 (613) 729-6193.

Due to delays in shipping, and to distributor's wishing to see certain films more than once, prints are often tied up for several months. The first screening for this year will be in November, and films should be at the CFI by the end of September.



BOX OFFICE GROSSES

L'empire des sens



Cathy's Curse						
Une Etrange Petite Fille	Can/Fre	Cinepix	29 July - 26 Aug	Que	4	\$118,500.
L'empire des sens	Japan	Astral	20 Aug - 15 Sept	Montréal	4	80,800.
La grande bourgeoisie	Ital	Frontier	29 Apr - 15 Sept	BC, Ont, Que	20	56,000.
The Grove Room	US	Frontier	1 July - 15 Sept	Alb, Ont, Que	11	57,000.
It's Alive	US	Dabara	9 Sept - 15 Sept	Ont	1	257,342.
Love At First Sight	Can	Ambassador	17 June - 15 Sept	BC, Ont, Que		45,882.
The Marquise of O	Fre	Prima	22 July - 22 Aug	Toronto	4	22,500.
L'ombre des châteaux	Fre	Prima	2 Sept - 15 Sept	Montreal	2	7,000.
One Man						
Un homme	Can	France Film	26 Aug - 15 Sept	Montreal	3	11,244.
Outrageous	Can	Baxter	5 Aug - 15 Sept	USA	6	300,000.
Rituals	Can	Astral	21 July - 15 Sept	Ont, Que	8	209,085.
Ils étaient cinq			26 Aug - 15 Sept	Que	3	67,265.
Smokey and the Bandit	US	Universal	22 July - 15 Sept	Canada	8	4,500,000.
La vie fantastique de Bruce Lee	Ital	France Film	9 Sept - 15 Sept	Que	1	50,000.
Why Shoot the Teacher	Can	Ambassador	24 June - 15 Sept	BC, Man, Sask, Alb, Ont, Que	12	800,000.
Young Lady Chatterley	US	Frontier	24 June - 15 Sept	Canada	12	230,000.



Gouvernement du Québec
Ministère des Communications
Direction générale du cinéma
360, rue McGill, Montréal, Québec, H2Y 2E9
Canada Telephone: (514) 873-2205

The *Direction générale du cinéma et de l'audiovisuel* (DGCA) is a government agency that comes under the *Ministère des Communications du Québec*. It coordinates the production and promotion of audiovisual material on behalf of the various departments of the Government of Québec, as well as promoting Québec cinema as a whole. The DGCA is responsible for acquiring, preserving and distributing government and Québec productions, or productions from elsewhere which are of interest to Québec. The following films, and many more, are available for purchase from the DGCA.

La leçon des mongoliens

Michel Moreau

french-colour ● 77 minutes ● 1974

Society has always regarded the mentally deficient and the mongol as "retarded". This film presents them to us simply, from another angle. Mongol children, who can teach us a great deal, are scrutinized directly, minutely and systematically by the camera.

Of Matter and Mettle

Jean Lepage

english-colour ● 10 minutes ● 1975

The viewer takes part in the preparations, efforts, joys and disappointments of young Québec athletes during the annual events of the Québec Games. The film, which moves at a swift, lively pace, won the highest award in the short subject category at the 8th Virgin Islands International Film Festival.

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Un petit canard pas comme les autres

Claude Roussel and Gilbert Gratton

french-colour ● 20 minutes ● 1972

If you adopt an animal, you become responsible for it. This is the story of a young boy who finds, looks after and heals an injured duckling. He then sets it free.
(Prize: Canadian Film Award)

White-tailed Deer

Bernard Beaudré

english-colour ● 11 minutes 48 seconds ● 1976

This film is intended to make known the deer-yard work of the biologists of the *Service de la Faune* of the *Ministère du Tourisme, de la Chasse et de la Pêche*.

UMIMMAQ

Bernard Beaudré

english-eskimo-colour ● 26 minutes 50 seconds ● 1976

The musk ox has been imported into Québec and everything suggests that this animal, whose habitat is the tundra, will be able to survive here without difficulty. For eight years now animals have been raised at Umimmaquautik, where they are doing well and reproducing. In the film we witness the realization of the aim of the experiment, the adaptation of the musk ox to the Québec tundra.

Wildlife no 1

Bernard Beaudré

english-colour ● 26 minutes 50 seconds ● 1976

Film to make known the work of the research workers and biologists of the *Service de la Faune* of the *Ministère du Tourisme, de la Chasse et de la Pêche*, dealing specifically with land wildlife.

Wildlife no 2

Bernard Beaudré

english-colour ● 26 minutes 50 seconds ● 1976

Film to make known the work of the research workers and biologists of the *Service de la Faune* of the *Ministère du Tourisme, de la Chasse et de la Pêche*, dealing specifically with aquatic wildlife.

a healthy case of craziness

Outrageous. Many people have thought it was, and for a variety of reasons. John Locke caught it in New York and was wowed. Ted Fox saw it in Ottawa and wasn't so impressed. And then there's Jim Kelly, c.s.c., who tells us about the shoot and about the investment made by the crafts-people.

by John W. Locke

Robin (Craig Russell) calling from New York about his job in the Jack Rabbit bar.



While I was waiting in line to get into the theatre to see Richard Benner's **Outrageous**, a classical little old lady stopped as she left the film, turned to the waiting crowd and said in a thick European accent, "It's the best show you've ever seen." This is not a typical reaction to Canadian films, and it is not an expected reaction from a little old lady to a film about the love between a schizophrenic girl and a female impersonator. The unsolicited testimonial proved to be very close to the truth: **Outrageous**, while not the best film I have ever seen, is the best Canadian narrative film I have seen, and forgetting about nationalism for a moment, it is a very good film indeed in 1977 international terms. It manages to be enormously entertaining and moving while offering insights about an unusual relationship between two unique people. And it manages to do this while acknowledging, rather than disguising, that it is a contemporary Canadian film.



Martin (Allan Moyle) and Liza talk with Robin in a Toronto streetcar.

The lady on the street critic referred to the film as a show, and again she proved to be very perceptive. A significant portion of the entertainment value of the film comes from watching the stage shows which are integrated into the film. Craig Russell, who plays Robin, does impersonations of entertainers and movie stars which are hilarious in their exaggeration of mannerisms of such women as Bette Davis, Barbra Streisand, Mae West and Carol Channing. Although Robin's impersonations are the best shows in the film, the lesser acts are unforgettable: A man who weighs perhaps 300 pounds plays the owner of a New York bar catering to the leather crowd. His normal attire includes a World War II combat helmet with his name, Jimmy, inscribed on it in glitter. And he does an extremely raunchy strip tease, in drag of course. **Outrageous!** A black drag queen dances to a song called "You Can Set the World on Fire" with such energy that it is difficult to notice the narrative significance of the lyrics. The routine is repeated later in the film with the hope that the audience will stop being overwhelmed by the sound and energy and think about the words.

All this is very showy stuff and it accounts for much of the momentum of the film. The stage acts are interspersed

with the development of the narrative in a way which keeps the film moving. It is a very serious story of the relationship between Robin and Liza (the schizophrenic girl beautifully played by Hollis McLaren), but the serious development of the story is neatly balanced by the shows and by the wit of the characters.

At one point, a poster for De Mille's **The Greatest Show on Earth** is seen in Robin's New York apartment. The poster can be taken as a reference to the showy facet of the film because characters often seem to be doing their act on and off the stage: Martin, played by Allan Moyle, shocks trolley riders with his mascaraed eyes; Robin and Liza play in the snow on Yonge Street; Liza acts sane for a social worker. The film is also filled with characters who want to amuse, and who are not bothered by making a spectacle of themselves; it is really like a circus at times. Finally, the structure of the film is like a circus in that we watch a circus by shifting our attention back and forth from one ring to another. **Outrageous** has this circus structure, or in filmic terms, it is structured by parallel montage. We alternate between seeing Robin's life and seeing Liza's life. The film opens with them apart, then they come together, then they move apart when Robin goes to New York, and finally they are together again in New York. Parallel montage is used to develop both their periods of separation and the details of their periods of living together. It is a



Robin on stage as Carol Channing.

very good choice of a structure because it allows the necessary freedom to repeatedly move back and forth between the serious parts and the spectacular parts without explaining to the audience exactly why the transition is being made at that particular time. The audience accepts the editing style, and with it, the abrupt transitions. These abrupt transitions keep the film moving, and it never seems quite as serious as it is. The structure accounts for much of the film's success.

John Locke is a film professor at Concordia University.

Seen from Behind the Camera

by Jim Kelly

From my standpoint, as director of photography, the first thing to consider is the budget of the film in relation to its ambitiousness. The film was extremely ambitious in terms of the number of locations, the extras, the size of the entire thing. There have been lots of low-budget films, like **Sudden Fury** which I did. But that one only involved one farmhouse and one barn. In comparison, **Outrageous** was extremely ambitious, and so the money really meant time, and knowing how to do it.

The public figure of \$165,000 is not what we had for production. I have it on good source that \$30,000 of that was spent at Cannes for publicity, and probably well spent. We had to produce the film for \$130,000. So, first of all, we had to work quickly and compromise. In terms of the camera, I chose an Arriflex 16M, which requires a large, bulky blimp, a blimp being the casing that goes around it to deaden the noise. It was a large camera that looks like a Mitchell because of its size, and this is the disadvantage, because it's bulky. The advantage is that you can get much better sound than by using the Arriflex BL which makes a lot of noise. Another advantage was that we were going with prime lenses to try and get the best quality possible for the blow-up. We sometimes used a second camera when we had to, and we used the BL then with the zoom lens so there are some zooms in the film, but that was a back-up camera.

In terms of lighting, again because of the production situation, the decision was made to go with minimum or simple lighting levels, using few instruments. In other words, low light levels, few instruments. I like to use low-light levels. The barn sequence in **Sudden Fury** was entirely at that low light level — all shot at 2.8 — and it was marvellous. I notice somebody has already pointed out that, in **Outrageous**, he couldn't see the face and he didn't like it. That's exactly what I do like.

Now the advantage of this choice was simply freedom for the actors and director. You have no large lighting instruments around which burn up when people get close to them and so there's more freedom for them to operate; plus it's faster. We can come in, work off the practicals, add

one other light and go. The disadvantage is that there is little depth of field. And the focus puller, my assistant, Richard Wincenty, did a fantastic job. There are many shots in the film that seem soft; this is because of the lens, not Rick.

We have one regret. We requested a test on the lenses and wanted that test blown up to 35mm and viewed in a theatre. Because of the time and money situation, this was never done. In fact, the arrangements for the lab were not made until almost one day before the film started, and so we were unable to really do anything.

So, although I think my lighting in **Outrageous** is far superior to what I did in **Sudden Fury**, the blow-up is atrocious because adequate time was not spent at the lab. I was given the opportunity to criticize, which I did, and that was the night before they went to Cannes. I assumed that, based on what we talked about, the blow-up would be changed. I learned later that because of the producer's rush to make sales and so forth, they didn't have the time. I think it could have looked as good, if not better, than **Sudden Fury**. As it now stands, I think it is a horrible thing. I didn't go to the gala or anything. I just wasn't going to sit through it; it was just too upsetting. It's unsatisfactory in terms of the colors and the tonality. Besides, the cropping they did badly affects my composition. When you blow up, you can't get the entire frame; you only get a portion of it. The blow-up was just set kind of in the middle. Now, if you're going to just do it on one pan without adjusting every shot — and adjusting costs money which they probably didn't have — it should have been set at the top. I mean, obviously, no cameraman sets a shot in which the actor's head pops out of the frame!

The director, Dick Benner, is a very sensitive, intelligent, rational guy whom I like to work with. I think he did a fantastic job considering that he's only done one minor film before, and no features.

One of the things that I like to do when working with a director is to work out what might be called the leitmotif. In other words, how can we embed in the visual, the conflict or the internal state, which is usually carried at the narrative line or in the dialogue? Some of the things that we were able to achieve might be of interest. Hollis McLaren continually

finds herself in corners, in an entrapment. You see the Toronto tower and then you think we're outside, and then we pull back and we're in one of those little narrow tight constructions with bars and so on. And then in the house, there are corners. She gets herself into corners trying to get away from the bone crusher. There were many things, like when she goes into the centre of the Toronto Dominion Centre, but they were forced to edit them out apparently. Other things, like barriers between people — the doors, and open spaces, separating people from contacting each other. I don't think that was effectively carried out in the film, but at least we were trying. And then, the other thing was the circular motif — like in the title and in the end — the unity and togetherness.

Dick was very susceptible and interested in trying to deal with the camera as more than a simple zerox of the actors. He's a guy who knows what he wants. So I could suggest things, but he was very much a director's director. He wanted this and he wanted that, and I think that's good.

The craftspeople feel that the investment of money at Cannes perhaps went to sell the film, but there is a conflict between protecting the investment of the investors or protecting the investment of the craftspeople. It's often thought that only the investors have an interest in the film, but on a low-budget feature, the pay does not compensate. A large number of people on the crew were really interested in doing things well, they have pride in their work. That's where I feel I've been sold out.

The producers had no real respect for the film medium or the craft of the film. They could have postponed the opening date in New York and gone back to re-do the blow-up. They could have said, "let's get this thing to work better". Instead, they decided, without consultation, that a poor blow-up would not affect sales, so they went with it. They feel they owe me nothing because I've been paid. Well, in fact, I have not been paid fully in terms of having had to invest a lot of myself.

Nevertheless, every producer in town had a shot at this and Dick Benner told me that none of them thought it was anything. Bill Marshall and Henk Van der Kolk were the only ones who recognized that **Outrageous** was something special, and would back it, which is to their credit. □

*Jim Kelly was Director of Photography on **Sudden Fury** and **Outrageous**, and worked second unit on **Rituals** and **Coup d'Etat**.*



Liza (Hollis McLaren), nutty as a fruitcake in New York as Robin's agent (David McIlwraith) looks on.

Another ingredient in the success of the film is the quality of the acting. The acting is so uniformly excellent that it is positively "un-Canadian." I have noticed that almost all Canadian films contain at least one atrocious performance; at least one person in each film seems to be unable to say their lines with conviction. I do not know whether this phenomenon is caused by the use of non-actors or actors with only stage experience or whether it is caused by limitations of the director's talent, but it occurs with alarming regularity. **Outrageous** is an exception to this generalisation, and it is un-Canadian in this specific sense: all the performers say their lines in a believable fashion. It does not have those moments when a poorly said line breaks the flow of the narrative by forcing you to think about the awkward way in which the line was said.

Hollis McLaren must be given credit for the film's best acting. She conveys Liza's craziness subtly with details rather than with shouts, and this works very well in the context of such a raucous film. For example, when Liza must appear sufficiently sane to a visiting social worker to avoid being sent back to the mental hospital, McLaren plays Liza with extreme tension. We clearly see how the performance of the simplest task, such as making a cup of coffee, is excruciatingly difficult for this schizophrenic child, and we sense the relief expressed by Liza's sigh when she has managed the task successfully. Hollis McLaren is tremendously successful at conveying Liza's difficulty just being in the quotidian world. She is so good that I think she will very quickly become Canada's next international film actress.

A further indication of the level of acting is that many of the film's crucial lines are extremely difficult to say. Points are made with lines which cannot quite be said with a straight face, but which somehow have to be said seriously enough so that they do not simply sound corny: when

Liza's psychiatrist asks if she sleeps with Robin, she replies, "Robin and I sleep in different worlds." Later Robin says, "There are three important things in the world: sex, movies and my career." And when Liza says she is dead inside because she lost her baby, Robin says, "You're not dead. You are alive and sick and living in New York like 8 million others," and "You just have a healthy case of craziness." These and other difficult lines are delivered with a style which makes you laugh, but which also makes the lines stick in your memory. It is quite an accomplishment.

Canadian films often seem to disguise their nationality. Actors and actresses never say "aye". Canadian artifacts like money and license plates never appear. The landscape looks like homogenized America. Their goal seems to be to look like they were shot in Kansas. **Outrageous** breaks these conventions usually followed by Canadian films looking for U.S. distribution, and it makes the broken conventions work in its favor. We see Canadian money and the Toronto landscape with landmarks like Starvin Marvin's burlesque theatre. We hear a crack about Air Canada flight bags lacking class, and snow seem to be everywhere. There is even a joke about Canada Council grants which of course will only be appreciated by Canadians. The best Canadian reference is a comment by one of Robin's friends who is trying to convince him to go to New York to make the big time. The friend says, "No Canadian act makes it here without the U.S. seal of approval." Robin is convinced and goes to New York to become a success. This comment and sequence of events is particularly interesting because it mirrors the path followed by the film itself: **Outrageous** first opened in New York, received some very favorable reviews and now we are waiting for it to return to Canada.

Outrageous is a very funny film, and it is a film which vibrates with energy during many of the stage scenes. It is

also a film which will move the audience to tears when Robin leaves New York for Toronto, in a taxi no less, after Liza has lost her baby. It is a tremendously enjoyable and moving film. Thank you, Richard Benner, whoever you are. I have been waiting for years to see a really good Canadian narrative film.

•••

A note on the Canadian feature film business: on a Saturday afternoon several weeks after it opened in New York City, **Outrageous** was completely sold out. That is very unusual for a summer weekend afternoon when many people have left the city. Also, **Outrageous** was playing at Cinema II, one of a strip of fashionable theatres in the East Side's Bloomingdale Belt. For the record, the other Canadian film to open in New York during the last year played in a sleazy Times Square dump. T-shirts advertising **Outrageous** were selling briskly outside the theatre as people lined up to wait for the next screening. And, on August 17, the film made *Variety's* list of "50 Top-Grossing Films", taking in over \$18,000 during the previous week at the relatively small Cinema II.

This success suggests to me that the problem with Canadian feature films is not primarily the lack of money. In

this era when film budgets are approaching \$30 million, there is little possibility that Canadian producers can, or should, compete with big budget productions. **Outrageous** is a low budget feature shot in 16mm which succeeds because of the quality of its conception and execution, not because of international stars and big bucks. This film and the enormously financially successful **Cousin, cousine** show that 16mm is not a barrier to commercial success. Filmmakers cannot seem to understand that an audience of non-filmmakers just does not notice the grain or the background noise of camera. I think that it is essential for Canadian filmmakers to begin to understand that technical perfection is not nearly as crucial as the quality of their ideas. I also think that the Canadian Film Development Corporation should use the international commercial success of features originally shot in 16mm as a justification for a renewed effort to encourage low budget 16mm feature film production.

If Canadian feature films are to achieve a place of importance in world cinema, I predict that it will be through low budget films made by young, unknown directors. It is important that these directors be given a chance. Richard Benner had the chance and look at what he has achieved. □

Richard Benner's **Outrageous**

d: Richard Benner, **sc:** Richard Benner, based on "Butterfly Ward" by Margaret Gibson, **ph:** Jim Kelly, **ed:** George Appleby, **sd:** Doug Ganton, **a.d:** Karen Bromley, **m:** Paul Hoffert, **l.p:** Craig Russell, Hollis McLaren, Allan Moyle, Richert Easley, David McIlwraith, Helen Shaver, Andrée Pelletière, Jerry Salzbert, Helen Hughes, Martha Gibson, John Saxton, Rusty Ryan, **p:** Bill Marshall, Henk Van der Kolk, **assoc. p:** Peter O'Brian, **p.c:** Film Consortium of Canada Inc., 1977, **col:** 35 mm, **running time:** 100 minutes.

There are many entertaining and genuinely touching moments in **Outrageous**, but the overall effect is unsatisfying.

Robin Turner is a homosexual hairdresser who is bored with his profession of boosting women's egos. Liza Connors is a high school friend who has been a voluntary patient in a mental institution for eight years. On her 26th birthday she leaves to seek shelter with Robin. He helps her to ward off the bone crusher demon of her madness and to cope with well-meaning mother, doctor and friends. She encourages him in his bid to release the female personages residing within him. Complications arise when, after a promiscuous fling, she becomes pregnant.

Craig Russell's life bears similarity to the Robin character he portrays with such warm conviction. Russell worked as a hairdresser in Toronto and broke into show biz in 1970 by playing Mae West in a gay bar. "Save your hands, boys", Robin/Mae says in his debut at the Jack Rabbit Club. "I might need them."

Hollis McLaren conveys the defenseless sensitivity of madness in a supposedly normal and straight world.

Though secondary characters are delineated with less sureness, the actors manage well. Allen Moyle is Marvin, obsessed with the desire to place all Russians and Chinese in concentration camps. Richard Easley is Perry, who realizes that he hasn't Robin's talent, yet valiantly tries to mimic Karen Black in **Airport** or a nun singing Ave Maria on roller skates. Martha Gibson's nurse is straight out of the cuckoo's nest, a Nurse Ratched type so dedicated to her job she even ferrets through Liza's garbage.

With such talent involved, there is potential here for a really gripping film. Director Richard Benner puts the stress, however, on Craig Russell, female impersonator, rather than on Robin Turner, hairdresser. Robin becomes another personality conjured up by Russell's talent.

The viewer is further distanced from the characters by choppy editing, uneven color photography, variable sound, and a general aimlessness in direction.

Some of the dialogue is funny and pointed. A New Yorker remarks that when he was in Toronto the only female impersonators he saw were women. Robin queries whether he should apply for a Canada Council grant in his bid for show biz razzle dazzle.

To use Margaret Gibson's beautiful short story, "Making It", from her collection, *The Butterfly Ward* as a springboard for easy laughs is lamentable. Several strong scenes between Robin and Liza give a glimmer into the film that might have been — a compassionately moving drama on the healing power of friendship.

Instead, one leaves the cinema with body pulsating to the dance music of Paul Hoffert, and mind swirling with visions of Bette Davis, Mae West and Judy Garland.

As a result, the viewer is left with a documented look at one man's magical chameleon ability to change from male to female before our awed eyes, and to capture the breathing essence of each star that he idolizes.

Ted Fox

Ted Fox is a free-lance film critic from Toronto.

rawi's camera WOWS

British cameraman Ousama Rawi worked on the film *Coup d'Etat* in Toronto and shares with Mark Irwin some of his thoughts and techniques about lighting.

by Mark Irwin

Ousama Rawi checks a shot



*I managed to meet Ousama Rawi two days before he began shooting **Coup d'Etat** for Magnum Films. I had followed his work after seeing **Pulp** (a Michael Caine comedy/thriller) in 1972. Since then I'd seen **Black Windmill**, **Gold** and **Sky Riders**, all of them incredibly well photographed and I was very honored to finally meet the man himself.*

Born in Bagdad, and educated in Scotland, he began shooting news for Border Television in 1965. He worked from commercials directly into features, thereby sidestepping the traditional clapper/loader to focus puller to operator to director of photography route. At age 38, he has over 12 features and countless commercials to his credit.

Cinema Canada: *I put your name in the company of Peter Suchitsky, Tony Richmond, Peter Bijou, Chris Menges... Is there a younger generation of cameramen in Britain?*

Ousama Rawi: Yes, there is. Basically, we've all sprung up from commercials. In Britain, the commercial field is very, very active and our lighting technique stems from that. Agencies in England like to experiment with photography and it's terrific for the cameraman... Plenty of opportunity to test new styles, new equipment. You can quickly find out if it's a good approach or a bad one, and either abandon it after a one day shoot or remember it for your next picture.

*What will be your lighting style on **Coup d'Etat**? You have used soft light very well in the past. Since this has a sinister military theme, will you aim for a harder edge?*

I try to light in a way that you're not going to be aware that film lights are present on the set. I hate seeing six shadows if there's only one lamp in the room, or someone standing by a window with the light coming from the inside instead of outside. I couldn't possibly photograph a scene like that, but in the old days they did.

So, I will go for a natural source of light, except we do have a war room; now there a mood has to be created, basically low key. Martyn (Burke) also wants a lot of depth of field; he wants to do a Citizen Kane effect. Someone 3 feet away is sharp and someone 30 feet away is also sharp. Now that, as you'll appreciate, is

*Mark Irwin, an associate member of the Canadian Society of Cinematographers, graduated from York University and has shot a number of films. Recently, he has worked on the **The World of Wizards**, and on **Blood and Guts**.*

going to need a lot of light; it's going to be a very warm set.

Your lighting style has managed to be a directional soft light. How have you achieved that?

Some bounce, some diffuse. It depends on two factors: one, the location we're shooting in, the height of the ceiling, the color of the ceiling, etc., and then two, the style of the director. If he wants to pan through 270 degrees or 360 degrees, that obviously poses a bigger problem for directional soft light.

*I've seen some lights you've had built for **Coup d'Etat** called a skylight. Is this something you've used before?*

Yes. I used it on the **Human Factor**. It's really to provide a directional pool of light, a soft pool.

What I saw was like a huge lampshade frame with six 1000 watt bulbs pointing down. Do you cover it with diffusion or velour or...?

Well, you have a choice: either white silk so that it glows, or else black for a small amount of spill. I think you have to do that, really. I think too many cameramen just live with what there is. They have a Lowell kit or conventional 2k, 5k or whatever. Why shouldn't we be able to design our own equipment? Normally, you get into a location and you have a pillar or something and you want to put a light behind it and you can't because the stand shows or the head shows... so design one. Make it narrow and small enough and that's it.

To go from lighting to hi-speed lenses and available light: how do you feel about non lighting?

Ideally, we shouldn't have to use lamps at all. I do like to design a shot in the sense of lighting. So just because I've got enough exposure doesn't necessarily follow that I'll not use any lamps; I try and change the direction of light, blocking out a window that's not in shot, etc.

What is your approach to night exteriors? Is there a blue moon that shines on us all?

Not the American blue... I find British blue is a much paler, much more subtle blue, against the full blueness of Hollywood. I dislike day for night. On **Sky Riders** I had a lot of it and the way I did it was with black and white film, high contrast. Let's face it, in moonlight you don't see colors so why show color.

*When Ossie Morris was shooting **Equus** here last year, he very openly expressed his lack of confidence in Canadian labs and their work. Have you experienced any such horrors?*

Well, Medallion is doing all our work. I spent a day with them and they were terrific. We're printing 5381 and not Gevaert because I think that finally 5247 and 5381 have now matured. I was very disappointed when I first used 5247 before the modification came in – terrible contrast ratio, shadow detail simply wasn't there. I mean 5254, you got used to over the years, and you could let somebody go under a tree from sunlit to shade and it looked after itself. This film – under the shade of a tree and it's gone, no detail, nothing. I had a look at the negative and it was all there, they just couldn't print it on 5381. So we printed it on Fuji – same problem. Then we tried 3M stock: not much better. Then we tried Agfa Gevaert and it was like chalk and cheese, the detail appeared. So the combination of Eastman 5247 and Gevaert 986 worked.

Why is it that lighting or a sensibility to light has changed? Why are you, as one of the world's best cameramen, seeing and expressing light differently than your predecessors?

I think that what we're doing is really nothing new. It was done in the early silent days of Hollywood. Soft light was in right from the start because California had this harsh direct light and they started putting muslin over their open stages and diffusing sunlight. Black and white film developed, it became more low key, more realistic. Then color film arrived and that needed a lot of light; in the early days it was even slower than ASA 8. Then sound arrived and suddenly cameramen had to shoot inside, on a sound stage. They had to provide an immense amount of light artificially and I think the lighting style, the mood built up with black and white, had to go for the sake of illumination level. They had to pump enough light in to illuminate the subject just to get an exposure. So you got this hard light style, with Fresnel lens lamps which produces hard parallel lines and cameramen got stuck with it.

Then film speed increased, first to 16 ASA, then to 32 ASA, then 50 ASA, and now 100 ASA and higher. But of course older cameramen had only worked with that kind of direct light so it remained. They would now use less lights, but still in the same way that was imposed on them in the early days.

So someone of your generation...

Isn't tied down. We started with a higher film speed and learned how to create a more natural light from the beginning.

Well, that explains how Freddie Young and Christopher Challis have retained their hard light style but then people like David Watkin, Billy Williams, Ossie Morris, Geoffrey Unsworth – they all worked through the same conditions, but their style is completely contemporary.

Well, there you see! Two of those names – Williams and Watkin – came from commercials. From a photographic point of view, commercials are a terrific training ground and a means of expanding styles instead of reinforcing old ones. I don't think I'd ever want to leave them because they allow me to experiment, to learn.

Canadian producers are forever flying in John Allcott or Peter Bijou to shoot commercials and Harry Waxman or Brian West to shoot features. The validity of this is a whole other article itself, but on a strictly craft basis, what gives British cameramen their style?

I have wondered that myself... maybe because of the light we have in Europe, it makes us have to reproduce light softer...

Well, consider this; New York cameramen are worlds apart from Hollywood cameramen. Gordon Willis and Owen Roizman have a totally different style from Conrad Hall and Haskell Wexler. It must be the texture of light.

It must be... in California, they'd have to fill a much stronger sunlight, while maybe New York has more haze... We have so many cloudy days in England that we get used to soft light, so when we go into a room we don't want hard light.

What have you learned or seen of any Canadian camera people?

I think they're second to no one, really. I wish you were more recognized around the world. In Britain, we don't have that much of an indigenous industry any more so we've become a sort of service industry for American producers. They pass through London, pick up a crew and go off elsewhere to shoot a picture. I think Canadian crews should enjoy the same advantages.

The advantages of international reputations will have to wait. Canadian cameramen may have built a name for themselves in the documentary field but we are greatly outnumbered and outclassed in theatrical features.

We provide many willing

assistants and second unit crews for the likes of **Supermen** or **Black Stallion**, but the creation of a distinct style, much less reputation, is a long way off.

And it may well be, as Rawi pointed out, that the source of creativity and style is in the volatile field of commercials. Indeed, the conditions and opportunities are the same, but here the attitudes are quite different. The likes of Fritz Speiss, George Morita, Nick Wolfe are not likely to sprint back and forth between the easy money and tight control of commercials and the 12 hour day, location schedule hassles of features. In fact, people like Harry Makin, Paul Van Der Linden and Bob Saad, recognized cameramen with a list of features to their credit, have taken their pension plans in the form of commercials, out to the greenback pastures. Only Reg Morris and Marc Champion, etc., work both sides of the line and perhaps it's the challenge of the one and the opportunity of the other that keeps them going. At any rate, the true test of style will be the day that a British producer flies a Canadian cameraman to England to shoot a feature. □



On the shoot of **Coup d'Etat**: David Usher, gaffer; Rawi, lighting cameraman; Rick Wincenty, first assistant; and Martyn Burke, director

When Claude Chabrol comes to town – and the town is Montreal – the filming milieu gets understandably excited. After a short introduction about the shoot, Lois Siegel gives us pictures and commentary about an incident which cost a bit of cash, and cast producer Melzack in the role of the hero.

the man upstairs

or... on the shoot of blood relatives

photos and text by Lois Siegel

Claude Chabrol, one of France's best known directors, came to Montreal last July to make his 31st film. And the irony of the situation, given the mood of the province and the state of the filming industry, was evident. Here, at last, is a French director of real importance, shooting in the second largest French city in the world, making his first film... in English.

Blood Relatives is a Franco-Canadian co-production, produced by Denis Héroux of Cinévidéo (Montreal) and Eugène Lépicier of Filmel (Paris). The two men had already worked together on **Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well** and **Living in Paris and Born for Hell**.

Julian Melzack of Classic Film Industries was the executive producer and the world sales of the film will be handled by Michael Klinger. Both were present during the shoot, and enthusiastic about the conditions of the production. Together with Chabrol, they made a point of congratulating the crew for its excellence, and Chabrol promised to return to Quebec to make another film soon.

photo: Jean-Yves Bruel



The murder of a young girl and the grief caused by her death is at the center of **Blood Relatives**

The film was made for \$1,400,000 from a screenplay written by Sydney Banks and based on a book by Ed MacBain. This psychological thriller stars Donald Sutherland as a detective, investigating the murder of a young girl. Stéphane Audran, Micheline Lanctôt, Jan Chamberlain, Aude Landry, Laurent Mallet, David Hemmings and Lisa Langlois make up the cast. Jean Rabier, who has worked on most of Chabrol's films, was the director of photography.

Chabrol is a practical filmmaker who believes in work. "The most important thing is to maintain a certain rhythm of production. Sometimes keeping up the rhythm, making a film or two each year, becomes more important than the inspiration. I'd rather make a film which is less good, or which is really mediocre, than not to make any film at all. If I only made the films that I really feel like making, I wouldn't have made one for a long time."

The shoot was long, lasting eight weeks. It almost went on longer, as Lois Siegel tells us on the following page.

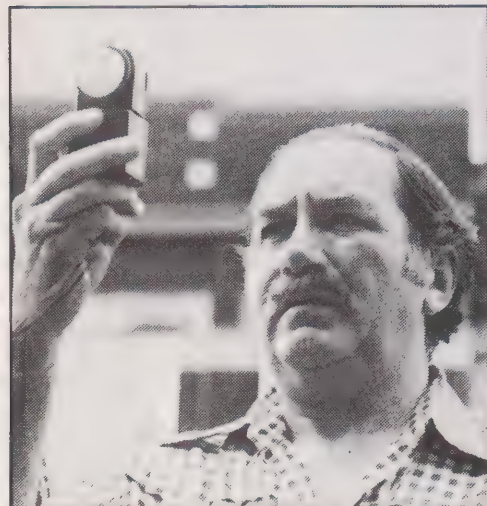


Donald Sutherland as detective

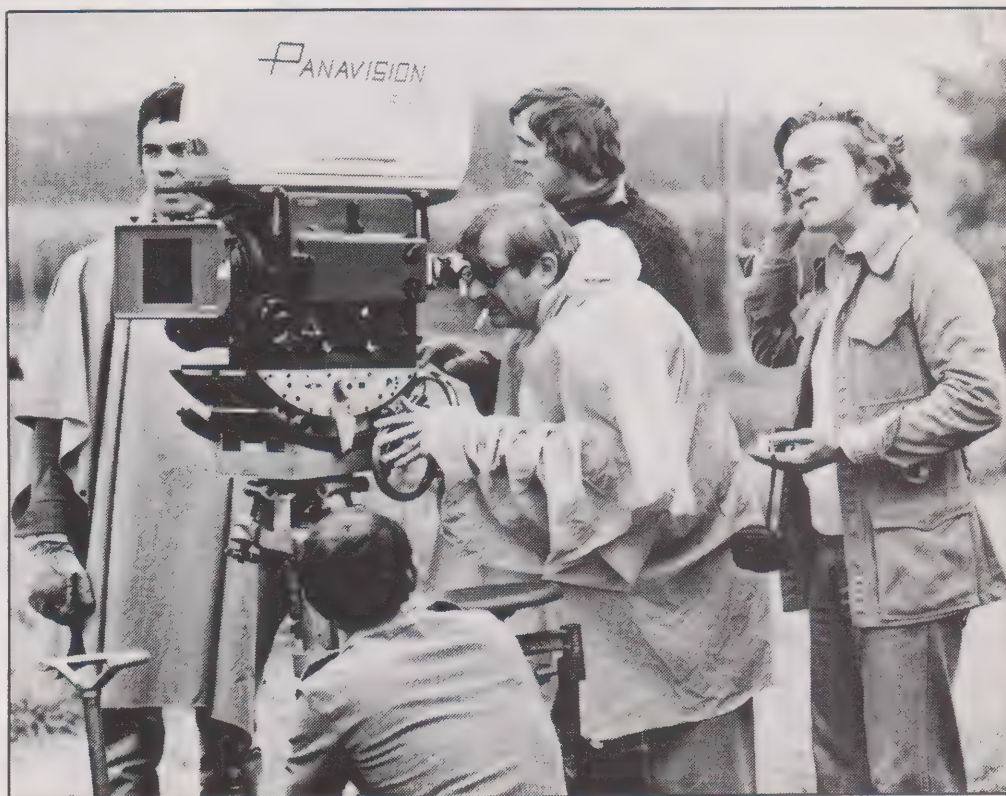


Denis Ménard, production assistant, counting his chickens

Jean Rabier, Director of Photography



Chabrol tripping through the rain at Oka and with the crew: François Dupéré, Didier Hoffman, Chabrol, Jean-Marie Buquet and Richard Ciupka



Even big name filmmakers have production problems.

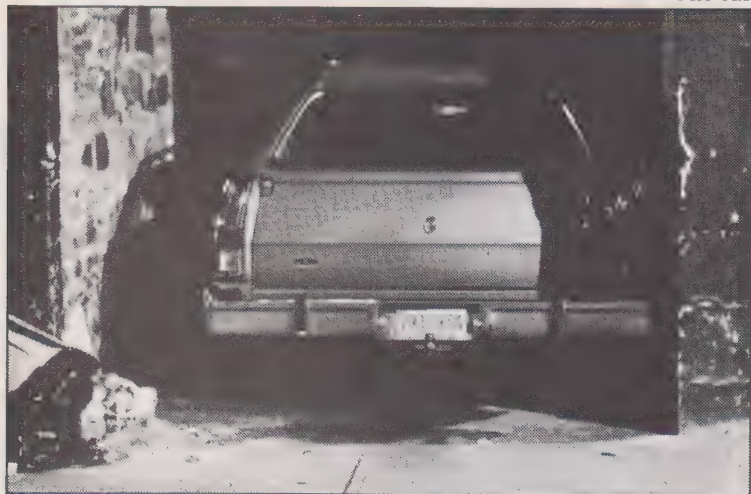
Claude Chabrol, noted French filmmaker who has directed over 30 films, was recently shooting a new film, **Blood Relatives**, in Montreal.

The film was budgeted for \$1,400,000, and the production schedule was moving along fine, despite a few days of rain.

The last night of shooting arrived, and with it, one of those lovely production nightmares.

The location was Old Montreal, one block east of Bonsecours on St. Paul. The exact location was an archway under which cars could pass to deliver packages to the restaurant Les Filles du Roy. In this exact location, where filming was to take place, an irate tenant, who lived above, unfortunately decided to park his stationwagon – to prohibit shooting, to prohibit Chabrol, and to teach film companies that they are not the only people in the world.

The car



He wanted peace of mind, a quiet night's rest – or whatever.

What the car actually did earn him was a rumored \$2000 or something very close to that figure.

To recap: the previous night the man upstairs had complained to the film company that he was being disturbed, that the peace was being disturbed. The film people supposedly tried to negotiate with him – even offering a good night's rest at the Ritz Carlton

All offers were refused.

The man was not impressed with the idea that he could go home the next day and say "I had a good rest at the Ritz Carlton last night."

The next day's pre-shooting set-up was scheduled for 7 p.m.. At 11 p.m., production managers were still running around trying to figure out how to remove the obstacle (stationwagon) from the archway.

The man



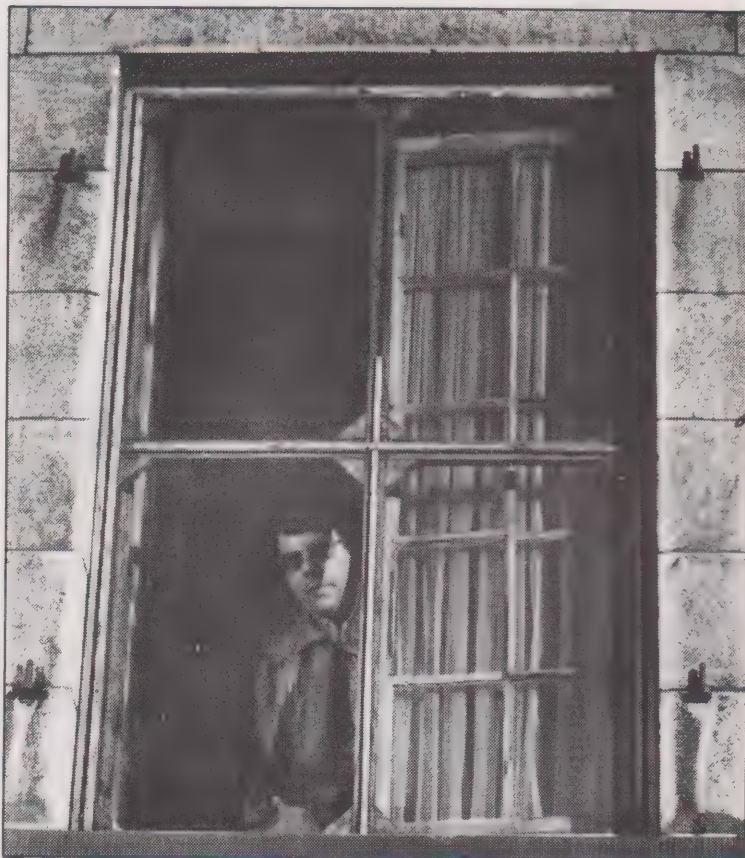
Lois Siegel is an independent experimental filmmaker and film professor who lives in Montreal.

They had tried everything. The police would not touch the car – "private property." The lawyers articulately considered the problem concerning the "right of passage" through archways, but no legal proof of land ownership was on hand at 7 p.m. The tow trucks would not touch the car for fear of lawsuit unless the police were there. The police would not be there if the tow trucks were there. It became a problem of which would come first, the chicken or the egg.

One tow truck did appear, and its light flashed upon the scene from a distance. That's where it stayed.

Julian Melzack, producer, appeared, even though his dinner was getting cold on the table, and he became the hero on the set.

He climbed the stairs to the second floor apartment to negotiate.



The producer

Just after 11 p.m. he stuck his head out of the window and exclaimed in a subdued tone of excitement "give me a few more minutes". Then he stuck his head out again and said that he had one night confirmed for shooting, and asked how much time they needed to complete the film. At least five hours was the verdict.

A few minutes later after more deliberation, he stuck his head out again, "I have two nights" And everyone cheered, with a note of restraint because no one wanted to upset anyone – especially the man upstairs.

And Chabrol stopped grimacing and pacing back and forth and a grin appeared on his face.

And Donald Sutherland smiled and everyone else smiled and the car was moved and the empty space in the archway was filled with actors and cameras and directors and a few lights and a few camera crew and a bit of sprayed water for the rain effect.

The man upstairs was silent.

Perhaps he already had the check for 2000 or so dollars. Perhaps money does buy peace of mind and contentment and allows films to be made and moral questions to be solved.

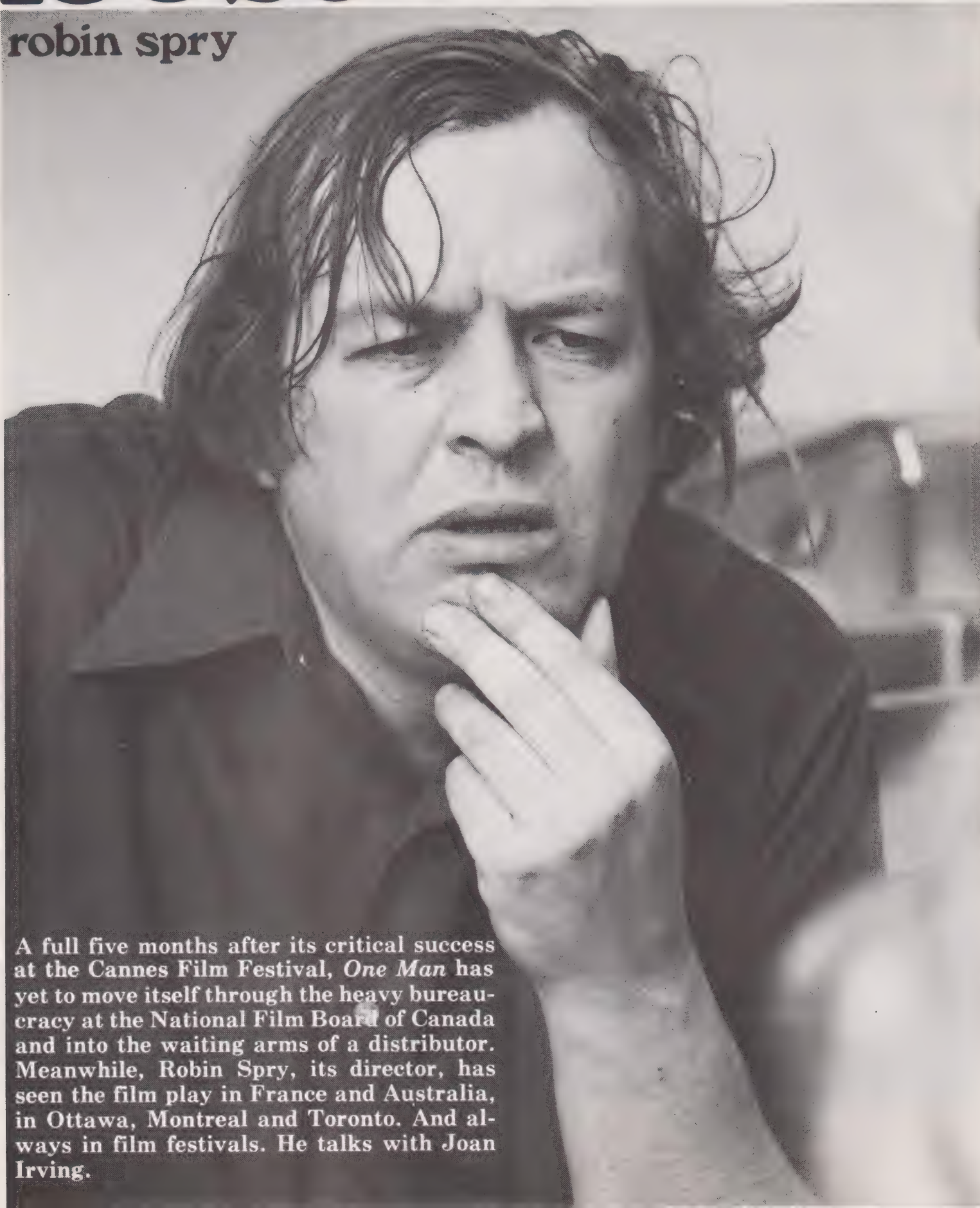
Perhaps the man upstairs did donate the money to The Maison du Rosaire across the street.

Perhaps film productions are moral or anti-moral. □

breaking loose

by Joan Irving

robin s pry



A full five months after its critical success at the Cannes Film Festival, *One Man* has yet to move itself through the heavy bureaucracy at the National Film Board of Canada and into the waiting arms of a distributor. Meanwhile, Robin Spry, its director, has seen the film play in France and Australia, in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto. And always in film festivals. He talks with Joan Irving.

I don't imagine I have to introduce Robin Spry or his films to readers of Cinema Canada. Though it probably is true that his work is more highly critically esteemed outside of the country than in, Spry's early feature films Prologue and Action reached large Canadian audiences through theatrical and television release. Early indications (to quote Spry, the "embarrassingly positive" reviews, largely from foreign critics, including the nod from Variety which called it "a winning tale that could easily make its way on TV and theatrical play-off") augur well for a wider than ever audience for his new feature One Man.

Spry was 29 when he made Prologue at the National Film Board of Canada. Eight years have passed. Unlike many filmmakers who direct their debut film at the Film Board and then leave for private industry, Spry stayed on. He is loyal to the NFB which trained him, gave him time to think and read and, above all, to test his ideas. But a certain weary resignation at the timely, cumbersome and finally risky business of seeing a film through the approval process at the Film Board has taken a toll of his energy. (The first script for the project which became One Man was written in 1970, and Spry is still running around prodding the Film Board into finalizing distribution deals for the film in Canada and the U.S.A.)

If it is a trade-off, Spry understands what the stakes are. At the NFB he writes 36 drafts of a script and then travels across the country to find the "right" actors. More importantly, he is able to make films which reflect things he cares about. Power and the politics of power, the major themes of his previous features, appear again in One Man, this time in a popularized form. The big issue of the early 70's, everybody's bandwagon – pollution – becomes the subject on which the film focuses. Even then Spry is not extending himself into unfamiliar, impersonal subject matter; the death of his brother Richard from "a form of cancer related to industrial pollution" brings urgency and fear in close. One Man had its North American premiere at Ottawa 77.

I met with Spry in Montreal where the film played in Le Festival international du film de la critique québécoise and then, the next week, was screened to enthusiastic houses at the World Film Festival of Canada. Spry's worries these days seem to be limited to the quality of the projection and sound in the various, and seemingly improvised salles, and to what few words he will find to say to the audience when he raises his burly self out of the theatre seat to receive their applause.

Cinema Canada: *What are your immediate concerns now that you have finished One Man?*

Robin Spry: *I'm going to write another script and try to make another film. Whether I can raise the money to do another film – whether the Film Board will make another feature, or whether I can find the money outside, I don't know. It's going to depend a bit on how One Man does. If it does very well then it will presumably be easier, but not easy.*

Is your relationship with the Film Board going to change if you find there is some restriction to your making feature films?

Yes, if I can't make them at the Film Board in some way or another – and it may or may not be possible – I'll make

them elsewhere. But I'd like to stay at the Board. My ideal existence would be to stay there and continue to make low budget socially oriented feature films. I don't want to make massive commercial Hollywood glamour movies at all.

There is a lot of activity in Canada now with big budget productions but it seems to be difficult to get low budget features under way. Do you feel the low budget feature is viable?

At a commercial level, nine times out of ten, it may be true that if you have a film that doesn't have main actors it becomes very difficult to sell it in the major market, which is the States. And, if you don't sell a film there, the chances are you lose money. If I make a feature for private industry in Canada, the budget will probably be higher than what I've had and I will have to go with two or three name actors; it will be imposed by the investors.

Was Len Cariou, in your eyes, a "name"?

No. He'd never done a film before. And he's still unknown because neither of his films have come out yet... my film and the film with Elizabeth Taylor, A Little Night Music. Maybe in the theatrical world, in a Canadian context, he is sort of a name, or will be I'm sure, but that's not why I chose him.

What was the attraction?

He's a very good actor, that was the primary thing.

Did you know that he would be able to make the transition from stage to screen?

I didn't think he would have trouble with it. Len is an actor who has worked on himself very consciously. He's not blindly intuitive, he knows how he gets somewhere and adjusted quickly to film. We spent time on it, talking and rehearsing with video, but he'd obviously thought about it before. The other thing that I really like about him – it's down the scale but there are always arguments about Canadian identity and Canadians being the same as Americans – I think there is a difference that I personally like a lot. For me, Len is a very genuine, or as they constantly say in these festivals, quintessentially Canadian person. Len has that perfect Canadian feel.

How do you define that quality?

Cariou, though he now lives in New York, hasn't in any way become Americanized in his character. This is a terrible generality, but I find that people who are infected with the American way of life spend a lot of their energy imposing their existence on the world around them. Len is confident about his qualities but he's happy to keep it to himself. It's somewhere in that area... there's a quiet strength. It was one of the reasons why I chose him. It was there in him and it's there in the film.

Could you tell us something of your experience with actors. How did your work at the Film Board prepare you for this film?

Well, I made Prologue and other dramatic films at the Film Board. Those films made it very clear I didn't know how to work with actors. Then the Board supported Mort Ransen's idea of having a directors' and actors' workshop, which I worked in and ran for awhile.

That was the first such workshop?

For actors, I think so.

Until that point there hadn't been much concern over developing that kind of expertise?



Spry talks with Jean Lapointe who plays the hood, Ben Legault

Not much. I think it was assumed that if you directed dramatic films you had learned somewhere how to do it... in theatre or at drama school or whatever. And I suppose for most people that was true.

I had worked in theatre a little in England and had made a number of short dramatic films in England. That was my training, working with actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company, in England. I lived in a world of actors, although I wasn't all that involved with theatre. At the time I was attending the London School of Economics which was right next to the Aldwych Theatre. Quite a few of the actors there had been at Oxford when I worked in the theatre as a still photographer. I had all those connections which enabled me to work with professional actors on a cooperative basis.

What brought you back from England to the Film Board?

I had applied for a job as a summer student in 1963, which was then I started making films and was contemplating film-making as a way of surviving. They refused me that summer but took me on the following summer. After that I returned to LSE (London School of Economics) to finish my degree and then the NFB offered me a job.

Did you find the Film Board dry after being close to the theatre world?

I was very busy learning how to make films. For many years the Film Board as a milieu was very exciting. I had

access to many facilities and was surrounded by enormous expertise. Also, the excitement of actually making films kept me going. Now I find it dry, in the sense that after years in one place you begin to feel that you're repeating yourself, saying the same things to the same people. I'm very much in that position now, which is why I'm taking a year off, to try to subject myself to other ways of making films, getting to know new people, seeing how other people do it.

Do you have a specific project in mind?

Yes, but I'm reluctant to talk about it. Essentially, I'll be talking to Canadian filmmakers and people in the business world about making feature films. What it will amount to is an informal investigation of what's happening with features here and how they're made.

Are you consciously developing a style?

I don't think, really, that I've made enough films to say that I am developing or have developed a style. There are certain areas I keep finding myself in, essentially contemporary situations where there is an immediacy that I try to reflect in the way I handle the film, the use of sound and more in the way we shoot things. Some of that is dictated by money, that I don't have the money to put 3,000 people in a crowd; therefore, I put my actors in a crowd that is already there. Automatically that imposes a TV journalistic feel on the coverage. In **One Man** and **Prologue**, and inevitably in

Action because it was a documentary, I have tried to be consistent with that style so that I can move back and forth between the different sources of circumstance. I suspect that as things go along that will be less present in my work, although, I may be stuck with it for life.

*What were the factors influencing style that you had to consider in **One Man**?*

Because it's about a TV journalist we (Douglas Kiefer, director of photography, Roman Kroiter, executive producer and Spry) wanted to try and give it the feel of a TV news item or documentary, and therefore we decided to shoot almost the whole film handheld. Although we choreographed things – it was a controlled, not an improvised film – even the complicated focus pulls were done, for the most part, handheld. The film has a slightly different feel. Douglas Kiefer, who was on camera, is very good at that. I think it works in the sense that very few people are aware it's not shot in a normal way. For me that's the tip of a new iceberg... beginning to play more with that controlled choreography.

Do you find the experience we've had in the last two weeks at the film festivals valuable? Are you seeing something new in Cinema? Is there anything new in Cinema?

I think there is always something new. I haven't always liked the new things but I think it's terrific to overwhelm yourself with all types of films, from all over the world.

The end result for me is that I find myself much more interested in making films than in seeing them. The film has to be extraordinary to really do much for me; otherwise, I'm thinking about how it has been made. A week after the festival, that will go away and I'll get back to just enjoying films, but in a weird way this gives me a lot of confidence. I see people making mistakes as gross as the ones I make, then I think maybe I can keep going.

I feel part of the world output of cinema now. But you have to subject yourself to that kind of thing and it's amazing how few people do. I went to a conference on the Canadian feature film Sunday and I was the only local filmmaker in the audience. I found that astounding.

We've talked before about the Canadian film industry and its problems. What are your current thoughts on the situation?

I spend a lot of my time, as all Canadian filmmakers do, complaining about this and that; I've heard so many com-

plaints over the last few years. Maybe because I've seen so many films over the last few days I have been thinking that maybe our problems are also our advantages; that because there are so many difficulties, those difficulties almost define a certain type of cinema. And if you succeed, in spite of all those difficulties, in making a Canadian film, the chances are you'll come up with something strong. All the counts against you culturally (at least in film, and it's probably true in the other arts) may add up to an enormous advantage because they forced you to think about what you're doing, why you're doing it and who you are, in ways that, if the perspective weren't there, you might not be forced to do.

It's also true that many people are not doing that; they're doing quite the opposite... saying we won't try to find out who we are and be ourselves; we'll in fact try to be somebody else. There's almost the possibility of a lifelong battle of massive proportions there which may be finally quite exciting. It's also very discouraging. I guess I'm feeling up because I have a film coming out. In a year from now, when I've completely failed to do anything else, I'll feel quite the opposite.

A lot of people in the arts here just can't be bothered with that "lifelong battle" so they leave...

There are two ways of looking at it. It can be looked on as a total defeat for those individuals and a total loss to our culture, and often that is the case; or it can be looked on as an absolutely essential period of expending one's expertise with the hope that that expertise will eventually be fed back into Canada, in the way that Ted Kotcheff has come back and made one film and is trying to make another.

You're more generous than most about this.

Again, it's subjective. Kotcheff, whom I talked to in the past two days, is, I feel, very honest, and genuinely wants to make films here... films that have something to do with being from here. He and Richler are genuine cultural products of Montreal. I'm not so generous with those who left Canada for the land of opportunity and, now that opportunity is here, are whipping back essentially to exploit it here.

But who am I to say which is which; all I can do is have my own feelings about it. It probably depends on how you're feeling about your own situation: It's very easy to feel resentful when you've been out of work for five years and the money you almost got for a feature is suddenly given to a Sophia Loren film because some Canadian investor was interested in meeting her at a cocktail party.



Jaworski (Jacques Godin) and Jason (Len Cariou) just after the shoot-out in **One Man**



Jason and his cameraman, Ernie Carrick (August Schellenberg) on the news trail



Jason, the news-hungry reporter, in a tussle

*You were in Australia recently with **One Man**. Do you have any comments on how Australians see the Canadian film industry, and if there is anything to be learned from their experience?*

They seem to think quite highly of it. Obviously, above all in the documentary area because of the Film Board, but also I think in the feature area. The Australian festivals have always taken an interest in Canadian films. We have a higher visibility in Australia than we do here.

Australia, because it is a physical entity with an ocean around it and cut off from its cultural roots by millions of Asians, is in many ways very self-contained. When you put Australians in Australian films, Australians go and see them. Right now, it's rather like Quebec was in the 60's; Australian films are full of energy and life. Even when they consciously make international exploitation movies, in spite of themselves, the films feel like Australian movies. There's a much healthier climate right now there than in English Canada. They're selling their films because they have an authenticity and a life. It's great; there's a very exciting atmosphere down there.

What draws Australians into the cinemas?

The fact that they see Australians on the screen.

The same doesn't appear to be a drawing factor for Canadian films...

No it doesn't... you know the reasons. We're completely inundated by American culture so that the distinction becomes confused. Also, the fact that Canada is made up of five different regions doesn't help; the Maritimes, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairies and the West Coast are culturally all quite separate. This makes it hard for a Maritimes film to do big business in the prairies; whereas in Australia, though there are differences, there is a greater common denominator that allows a person from Perth to respond to a film from Sydney.

...Northrop Frye's thing about unity doesn't have to mean homogenization. The exciting thing about Canada is that it is not homogenized and yet it is a country. If you have to homogenize in order to stay together, you might as well pick up the whole shooting match and join the States.

Do you find Montreal a particularly creative place to work?

I like Montreal a lot because you have the clash between two cultures, because all the problems are being expressed

at two levels all the time – French versus English, and Canadian versus American. The confusion and contradictions that come out of that, and also the energy, is lovely.

*It doesn't appear as a major factor in **One Man**.*

It can't appear in every film. Still, it's there in **One Man** in the sense that the film is about the distortion of society by big business, which is, to a certain extent, what all these battles are about anyway. So, yes it is there, but not in an explicit way.

*Okay, let's end on a question about **One Man**. Do you feel that the choice offered in the film – Brady's decision as to whether he should act on his knowledge, or revert back to security, which would solve the problem of his wife and kids – is something everyone faces?*

We all have the choice to a certain extent. It's pushed to the limit in **One Man** and becomes a life or death question, but we all balance what we are prepared to do in order to have money, how dishonest we are going to be, how destructive of our own sense of ourselves we are prepared to be. Almost everybody works for money; therefore, there is someone who can take that money away. That is a position of power we all have to cope with in one way or another, sometimes as employers, sometimes as an employee. In that relationship is the question that is posed in **One Man**. It's there for practically everyone in the world.

In the film, the crunch seems to come when Brady questions whether he has the courage to go through with his revelations.

Courage – a holding on to the importance of ourselves as individuals – becomes the key to it all. If we all give in to the financial blackmail that we're subjected to, then those that have the power and the money automatically have all the power and dictate what happens in the world. If the world is to have any freedom at all, there has to be a limit to that in everyone's life. If the situation becomes bad enough and people respond enough, you get a situation where you have revolution.

That's what revolutions are... people eventually saying "we've had enough". Because we live in a stable country, in a rich country, most of us can spend most of our lives avoiding the question.

I think it's very important that the question be faced by people; that our society doesn't slip further into being in the hands of money. One of the reasons for that film is that we have to somehow take those stands now. As things concentrate, as power falls into fewer and fewer hands, as technology advances into mind control areas, there may come a time where it's not possible to take that stand. It's already pretty hard to identify those things in your life.

*Is making **One Man** your stand?*

I don't think I take that stand personally. There was a lot of struggle in making the film but it wasn't particularly dissimilar to some of the things in the film, obviously, on a very mundane level, as opposed to a life and death situation. It was a message to my own conscience, but not much more. I'm a filmmaker and I try to make films about my concerns, but I in no way feel that making the film was a monstrous act of...

Well, then we can presume you've got energy left to do something else, another film.

Touch and go on that...

We both chuckle. It is approaching noon. The rattle of cups in the tea room we've been sitting in begins to drown our conversation, so we pack it up, Robin to attend another screening at the festival.

PROFESSIONALS

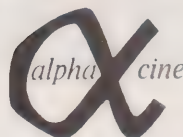
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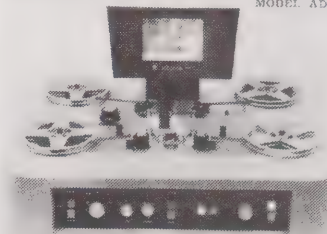
The Model AD11 is a horizontal editing table with one Super-8 picture and one Super-8 full coat sound track. It permits straight-forward editing since picture and sound correspond frame for frame and in length.

The table has four independent winding motors and an inching knob for manual operation is also provided. The film head is equipped with an eight-sided prism and the picture is rear projected onto a daylight ground glass. The sound is reproduced through a built-in speaker. Jacks for earphones or a remote speaker are provided. The film and sound tracks can be uncoupled and moved independently.

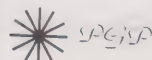
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- Forward and reverse speed is continuously adjustable from zero to approximately 62 frames per second.
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the diary films of mike rubbo

Mike Rubbo's documentaries are highly personal statements. He becomes actor and commentator, and lets the film take its own shape. Below, Piers Handling provides us with a theoretical context in which to view these films, and then gives us a glimpse into each of them.

by
Piers Handling

Mike Rubbo



"I just knew that... any film that tended to show any sense of order or control about the situation would be false."

— Mike Rubbo talking about **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** in *Sightlines*, Fall 1975

Mike Rubbo's films contain highly interesting attempts to deal with some of the serious formal problems of the documentary film. He himself appears in his first films, **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** (1970) and **Persistent and Finagling** (1971), though his role as a social actor is minimal. In his next films, **Wet Earth and Warm People** (1971), **The Man Who Can't Stop** (1973) and **Waiting for Fidel** (1974) his involvement on the image track is extensive. These films, along with **I Am An Old Tree** (1975) and **I Hate to Lose** (1977) all share similar, although not identical, structural strategies. In all of them, Rubbo himself narrates, using non-sync direct address.

His narration is consciously opposed to what we traditionally associate with direct address. Instead of being serious, well-presented and impersonal — just think of Lorne Greene in the *Canada Carries On* series — Rubbo reads his text in a slow and quiet manner, at times using a gentle

monotone. There is a complete lack of insistence about what he says, and this is combined with his personal thoughts as to what is happening on the screen, avoiding any attempt at persuasion. The films become journalistic diaries, subjective reactions to situations that generally are totally unfamiliar. Initially, **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** and **Wet Earth and Warm People** seem to lack any real focus as a result. In the first instance, Rubbo has been sent to Saigon. We are presented with a picture of the city and its people which seems removed from our expectations of Vietnam. We are shown no jetfighter strikes, helicopter attacks, or infantry patrols — the traditional images of war that have become so familiar through television coverage. Instead, the war intrudes in different ways. There are the children, often parentless, who steal to get by; the American journalists working for Dispatch; or the young Vietnamese soldier visiting his family under the watchful eye of an officer because he has already deserted once. **Wet Earth and Warm People** is pervaded by this same picaresque sense of a real inability to say much more about Indonesia than an ordinary tourist. Continually shown to be the centre of attention and curiosity, there is little chance for Rubbo and his crew to capture the spontaneous.



Film criticism, documentaries and direct address or... Who Says What to Whom?

The new advances in film criticism have tended to neglect the documentary film. Only recently are pertinent questions being asked about the codes, strategies and structures of this particular genre. Bill Nichols, in his article for *Screen*, "Documentary Theory and Practice" (1), begins to raise questions of this type, while developing a methodology for analysis that he is pursuing in relation to the work of Frederick Wiseman. Modern semiological criticism has dissected traditional, narrative fiction film to question the illusionism and complicit ideology that lies at its core. Not surprisingly, the same forces are at work in the documentary film. In fact, as Nichols points out, the danger of illusionism is even greater because most people unconsciously accept the argument that documentary equals reality. Consequently, a filmmaker working in this field has to be extremely careful of the formal choices he makes in filmic terms — his is an awesome responsibility.

Using Nichols' explorations that I find so interesting as a touchstone, I want to offer a few tentative thoughts on Mike Rubbo, a transplanted Australian who has been making films at the National Film Board for just over ten years. Rubbo is little known in this country; his reputation elsewhere is far more substantial. There are probably a number of reasons for this but I think it is largely a stylistic difference. Rubbo's films exist outside of the current mainstream of the genre, and are quite different than their Film Board counterparts. In fact, it is surprising that Rubbo has even been allowed to work at the Board as very few of his films deal with Canada at all, the settings being as exotically diverse as Vietnam, Indonesia, Australia and Cuba. This could explain parts of Rubbo's singular style and why he has evolved the way he has in terms of making aesthetic choices. But how is Rubbo's style distinct, and what does it mean?

Let me begin by way of a small anecdote. Two years ago I spent a week at the Robert Flaherty seminar, and a year later had four days at the Grierson seminar in Orillia. Both were well attended by filmmakers and I found their approach, comments, and criticisms most revealing, not so much in what they said, but in what they didn't say. Very little time was spent on sound/image relationships and what this meant in filmic terms. One film that contained this dialectic at the centre of its enquiry, Tom Braidwood's

Limited Engagement, had an unhappy reception. However, while watching the numerous documentaries at these seminars, it was instructive to note the mode of address which was chosen. Nichols writes that:

"Historically, most documentaries have used the mode of direct address, and it is still preferred by television documentary, political films and most sponsored or commercial films. Indirect address seems to invite risks of incomprehensibility (the lack of a guiding hand) and, for political filmmakers, empiricism (a risk well confirmed by much *cinéma-vérité*). Conversely, the adoption of direct address has run the perennial risk of dogmatism, while offering the advantage of analytical precision." (2)

The use of direct address suggests a number of things, often quite unconsciously, to an audience. It is most obviously the voice of authority, and can suggest a comprehension of a situation which is not, in fact, understood, or an order where none exists. It's as if the voice is telling us, 'this is what it is like', 'this is the truth of the situation'. It is no accident that our evening television news is presented to us this way, combining both forms of direct address, on-screen and off-screen (or using Nichols definitions, a sync narrator and a non-sync narrator). A certain order has to be imposed on the material for a number of reasons, but it usually doesn't allow for questioning or discussion. The use of direct address to enclose the film into a unified statement which often excludes the viewer from any kind of participation in the action presented. We are presented with a situation which is then made sense of by the narrator and/or filmmaker. The manipulation of reality is then complete and is subject to multiple distortions.

How then to avoid these formal and aesthetic problems? The method of indirect address is one alternative. Social actors (*not* film actors) do not address the viewer as subject. This, however, raises other formal problems, as Nichols mentions, because indirect address is also the principal mode of fictional narrative cinema. As he goes on to suggest "... a less problematic course is to aim the exposition towards elucidation or description rather than argumentation." (3) Mick Rubbo's films represent one effort to use direct address without overloading it with authority, to use it to raise questions and involve the spectator.

Rubbo's own presence in film as a social actor reinforces the personal reflections that we hear on the sound track. There is an important recognition of his participation and involvement in the action being filmed. Rubbo does not give us a third-person impression of what is happening; instead, he works in the first person, through the narration and on the image track. I would hesitate to refer to Rubbo's technique in Brechtian terms, because the final effect involves little distanciation. But, like Godard's use of direct address to rupture the narrative flow ("diegesis") of the fictional mode, Rubbo makes us continually aware that we are watching a film; his films do not appear as a transparent window opening out on reality. Furthermore, Rubbo uses this device to comment on his own actions within the film, which permits him to voice his doubts, fears and concerns. This allows Rubbo to view himself in a number of different ways, at times humorously – as an awkward participant in events; or, ironically, as perhaps not belonging. The outdoor screening of films in **Wet Earth and Warm People** is evidence of the complexity of thought and feeling that Rubbo can deal with by using this technique. The warmth, excitement and wonder of the film evening (for many it is the first time they have seen this incredible invention), with Rubbo delightfully addressing the villagers in Indonesian to hoots of laughter, is delicately replaced the next day when they pack up their generators and projectors before leaving. Rubbo's narration while they are doing this voices his own doubts about whether the whole thing was a good idea – introducing the technological complexity, of which he is a representative, to these people. His feelings of inadequacy, and perhaps guilt, are subtly reinforced through the inherent magic of the music and dancers in the forest, which is intercut with the cutting of the bamboo, a sequence that follows immediately after the film evening. There is a conscious dialectic at work in these scenes – "a cultural battle" as Rubbo calls it – that is constructed for us out of a complex intricacy of film components.



While James Cross was being held somewhere in Montreal, the Stop bus was running its Pollution Bus Tour.

This cultural battle is at the centre of **Waiting For Fidel**, where an unusual threesome visits Cuba with the ostensible purpose of interviewing Castro. Rubbo finds himself in the

company of Newfoundland's fiery ex-premier Joey Smallwood, and a millionaire who owns radio and television stations, Geoff Stirling. However, the Castro interview never materializes, but Rubbo finds much of interest in Smallwood's and Stirling's reaction to the Cuban experiment, as they tour the island visiting hospitals, universities, and construction sites. Geoff Stirling is the continual sceptic, a product of the free-enterprise system that has given him his millions. Yet Smallwood, with a history of socialist legislation behind him, acts as a foil to his business friend. And where is Rubbo in all this? He is certainly a presence. Perhaps he is more restrained than he would like to be, unwilling to commit himself too strongly for fear that it will unbalance the film. However, in the marvellous confrontation scene where Stirling attempts to put an end to the film that Rubbo is making but shouldn't be, the filmmaking process is brought under fire and we are made aware of some of its economic contradictions. Accused of being wasteful and extravagant, Rubbo is confronted with the private enterprise mentality of western society when Stirling claims that he is paying for the film in the cameras, the tapes for the sound recorders, the processing, etc. The Castro interview is all that is required of Rubbo, so why is he wasting all this footage on what seems to be irrelevant?

Now the documentary process can place a 'simple' set of demands on a situation and on filmmakers. For instance,



One of the endless ideological dinnertime arguments that punctuate *Waiting for Fidel*. Rubbo is lecturing Smallwood and Stirling.

one is sent to Vietnam or to Cuba, and is expected to bring back certain images. There are preconceptions as to what material should be brought back. This inevitably imposes subconscious restrictions on a filmmaker. He is expected to satisfy his sponsor, and ultimately his audience, who impose similar expectations. Particular images assume a position of requirement. If these images are not included there is a fear of turning people away to something more exciting or more familiar. But Rubbo's style is the complete contradiction of these demands, even to the point of suppressing purely aesthetic impulses if they don't serve to advance the film. This is partially another facet of the "cultural battle". So **Waiting For Fidel** becomes, not the film that was expected, but something completely different. It arises out of situations, as opposed to trying to control or dominate them. This is true of all six of Rubbo's 'diary' films. He finds what is there, not what he expects to see.

Earlier I placed great importance on the final effect of Rubbo's own voice on the sound track, suggesting that it was substantially different from the anonymous 'voice of authority' style that marks so many documentaries. I find this interesting not just for its formal effects, but also be-

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cause it is inextricably tied to important thematic concerns that unite Rubbo's work. If the choices of certain modes of address indicate subtle filmmaker/audience relationships in terms of watching the films, it is also tied to an active/passive response to what we are presented with. Furthermore, this is linked to the reinforcement of invidious power structures; we as an audience either participate in the film, or we are spoken at, with little corresponding sense of interaction. This aesthetic is translated into practical terms within the films. Rubbo is intrigued with power and the social process, and how this power affects the individual in everyday, commonplace ways.

In **Wet Earth and Warm People** we are drawn towards Hussein, the betcha driver (betchas are bicycles with a seat for the passenger in front of the driver). The betchas are being continuously harassed by the police and the military in Jakarta. They cannot use certain roads at certain times. Yet, as Rubbo argues, the betcha is an ideal form of urban transport, quiet and pollution free. In trying to get an answer as to why these bicycles are disliked by the authorities, Rubbo is met with evasive replies. He eventually surmises that it is perhaps because the betcha is a symbol of the past, of something that Indonesia is now ashamed of in its attempt to move into the twentieth century. So, to make his living, Hussein must take back-roads to avoid police traps.

Rubbo doesn't stop here. We are shown how this touching inconvenience interrelates with the curious web of society that surrounds us. The chief of police who must enforce the law is dealt with as extensively as Hussein. He is seen as an intermediary who must enforce laws not of his making. Instead of being coldly remote and officious, he is as human as Hussein – kind, gentle and amusing, with a paternal sense of care for people. His authority has surprisingly not hardened him. In fact we feel a great deal of sympathy for him. The governor, Sadekin, is handled in a similar fashion. When we first see him, checking to identify papers of a nervous street vendor, he is presented as a traditional authority figure. But as we come to know Sadekin, he becomes a benevolent type of father-figure, proudly showing Rubbo his successes in improving the slum conditions in Jakarta, while in the villages he is surrounded by adoring children.

But the suspicion that marks many of the contacts between the 'two sides' in **Wet Earth and Warm People**, is also a part of **Persistent and Finagling** and **The Man Who Can't Stop**. The women of STOP (Society to Overcome Pollution) have a series of frustrating meetings with people they think can help them in their crusade – the university researchers at Montreal University, and the radio announcer, Blaker, whom they want to have as their host for the bus-trip around Montreal – who are either uncooperative, or place a number of demands upon their participation. Similar situations are visible in **The Man Who Can't Stop** when Francis Sutton, a middle-aged Australian commercial advertiser, disgusted by the pollution of Sydney's beaches, tries to get people interested in an inland sewage scheme. The indifference, or guarded hostility, of their encounters is overcome in both films as a fact of life that must be lived with and confronted. But their frustrations are balanced by those occasions when they receive support and encouragement – the student in **Persistent and Finagling** who researches pollution levels of various Montreal factories, and is happily prepared to share his information, or the woman who recognizes Sutton and voices her admiration for him. If those people in power positions are anonymous, or at best detached, glimpses of touching humanity are evident around the fringes of all the films.

Standing in stark contrast to these skirmishes are the two Cuba films, and in particular, **Waiting For Fidel**. There

is no need to persuade or cajole power, or people in authority in Cuba; it manifests itself in a multitude of ways, from the obviously visible to the more imperceptibly transparent. The weekly political meetings of citizens provide a forum of dialogue, and evidence of everyone's participation in the social and political process. Nevertheless, Rubbo remains slightly sceptical of what he perceives as an 'organized' outlet for expression. But regardless, he is confronted with numerous examples of a benevolent allocation of a society's power through its institutions – its schools, universities and hospitals. Their attitude to the insane and mentally ill, resulting in the successful rehabilitation of many of their patients, is viewed with admiration for the simplicity and humanity of approach. Similarly, the visit to the construction sites of a new city being built by those who will live in the apartments once they are finished, is met with this same sense of fascination. Many of the workmen are fishermen by trade, untrained in construction work, but they have learned on the job. Throughout Cuba there is an overwhelming sense of purpose and unity about what is being accomplished – a harmony of a people with its leader Fidel, an example of power and its constituency working together.

One may ask at what cost this has been achieved; has anything been lost? Rubbo's second Cuba film contains elements of the answer, even in its title, **I am an Old Tree**. This line is spoken by a middle-aged doctor who talks about the revolution and what it has meant to present-day Cuba. He notices the changes, and remarks that the younger generation is different, but unfortunately there are things in him that can't be changed, it's too late in his life, he is too set in his ways, he is 'an old tree'. But if conflict between the individual and his society is evident in all of Rubbo's other films, even this statement does not deflect this film away from what is surely the warmest and gentlest of the six diary films. The 'cultural battle' that exists at the heart of the other five films, is absent in **I am an Old Tree**. Or rather, it is not contained *within* the film; it defines Cuba against everything that surrounds it. But Rubbo too, sadly admits that he fears he is also an old tree, admitting in part that the struggle between the west and the emerging third world will continue, regardless of how sympathetic he might be to its experiments.

Rubbo has gravitated towards countries in a post-colonial phase of their history, countries that have been victims of nineteenth century imperialism – Vietnam/Indo-China, Indonesia, Cuba, and to a lesser extent Australia. How important this is to Rubbo is hard to assess, but it would seem to be related to the cultural battle that he perceives around him. As white westerners, we are continuously made to feel

...an old tree, too old to bend completely.



as usurpers, coming from a culture that is disturbing the natural flow of life. In **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** one of the American Dispatch journalists tries to insert himself into Vietnamese life, but he is always aware of an unbridgeable gap. The Vietnamese knowledge of Americans is that they either kill or give. This places a series of demands on both cultures – the American is misunderstood by the Vietnamese on one hand, while the Vietnamese turn into perverse second-generation Americans like Ui aping a small-time twenties gangster. Ui's pidgin English is a further example of the mutations that are taking place, and this is confirmed in **Wet Earth and Warm People** when we find out that Hussein is picking up English. As Rubbo notes, they shed one skin only to replace it with another. Legacies of their historical past are a further reminder. In **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** Rubbo comes across an old cyclo-driver who fought for the French in the First World War, while the beaten-up Chevie in **Wet Earth and Warm People** is similar to the American cars of the fifties seen everywhere in the Cuba of **I am an Old Tree**.

While Rubbo has great affection for these countries and their struggle for survival, he is sensitive enough to realize that he is inextricably a part of that colonializing force. This is one of the reasons he is so attracted to the different elements of magic in these cultures. The Coconut Monk walking the map of Vietnam from south to north as a symbol of eventual unity in **Sad Song of Yellow Skin**, or the dancers in the forest, the puppeteers and the theatre group in **Wet Earth and Warm People**, function as beautiful mysteries in the face of Rubbo's film technology. While this type of magic is absent in **The Man Who Can't Stop** and **Persistent and Finagling**, nevertheless there is a strong element of symbolism in these two films, symbolic gestures like the dumping of water through the hoop into Sydney harbour in the first film, and the bus tour of Montreal to point out the polluters in the second film.

While the mystery and symbols of these various cultures serve to unite their communities in highly different ways, Rubbo places great faith in individual action. The members of Dispatch that we see in **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** are visible proof that the renegade can be of major importance, largely because of his strongly developed sense of individual action. Partially responsible for breaking the story of the My Lai massacre, their essential apartness allows them to view situations from a different perspective. Yet their solitude is ironically a direct function of their commitment. Sadekin in **Wet Earth and Warm People**, Francis Sutton in **The Man Who Can't Stop**, and the housewives of S.T.O.P. in **Persistent and Finagling** are all individuals who are challenging the traditional system. Even the two Cuba films which have the strongest sense of community action to them, are overshadowed by the continual presence of one man – Fidel Castro.

It has been said that every action is a political action regardless of whether it is meant to be or not. The absence of something says as much, in different ways, as its inclusion. While Rubbo would probably not consider himself a 'political' filmmaker, his films are all concerned with the body politic, its basic relationships and interrelationships with other people, and what this does to us all. In **Sad Song of Yellow Skin** it may be the questions that arise through Ui's contacts with Americans; in **Persistent and Finagling** it could be how a group of concerned individuals is forced to overcome certain obstacles to voice their point; perhaps in **Wet Earth and Warm People** it is explored through the daily annoyances that Hussein has to deal with to earn a living. Human interchange is very fundamental and simple, Rubbo might be saying to us, its problems are universal. He has also found unique ways of dealing with his concerns, an attempt at involving us in cultures that are es-

entially foreign but which can be explored for their similarities. Aesthetically, Rubbo is challenging the boundaries of the documentary in highly novel ways that relate to what he is trying to observe in the world around him. One can only hope that he does not pull back from the challenges that he has set for himself, through lack of recognition in this country.

The dynamics of social and political interchange are an integral part of all of Rubbo's films but in his latest work, he has excelled himself. With an uncanny intuitive sense of how this dialectic operates, Rubbo set about to make a film on the last Quebec provincial election held in November, 1976. **I Hate to Lose** is the result, a film in the mode of his other 'diary' films, assured and highly observant, warm and again gratifying in its feel for first-person journalism. Rubbo chose the electoral race in Westmount as his subject, originally to focus upon the interesting candidacy of Nick auf der Maur, leader of the Democratic Alliance, a left wing group who were expected to do well in the election. But, as in his other films, the material begins to chart its own course, and Rubbo follows these threads as they develop. Just as auf der Maur lacks a strong presence in the film, his opponents – especially George Springate, the incumbent Liberal, and the Union nationale representative, "Shorty" Fairhead – begin to attract Rubbo's attention. Furthermore, this is an indication of how successful a campaign they are running. While auf der Maur is a rational, sympathetic but relatively unemotional man, Springate is the opposite, a tough, gutsy and robust professional who stumps his home riding with growing confidence.

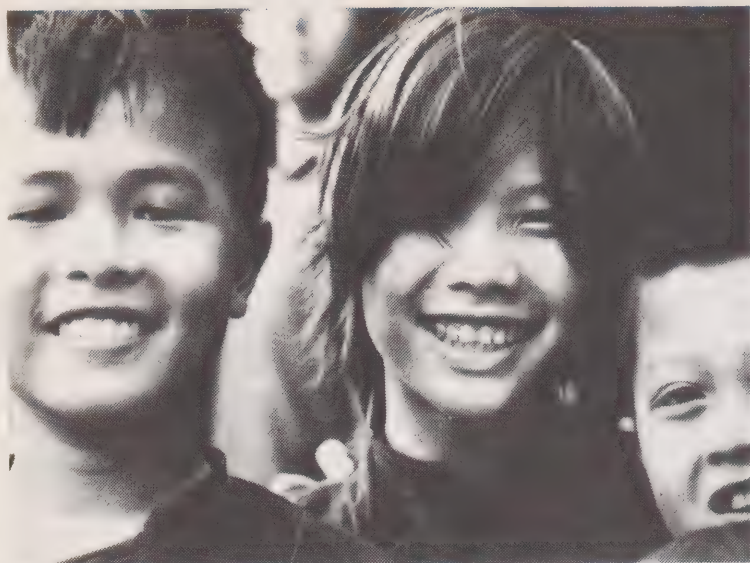
The film is too complex to do it justice in a couple of paragraphs (and I just saw a working copy of it), but the final ten or fifteen minutes which covers election night is probably the finest bit of work that Rubbo has done, matching in sheer complexity and sensitivity the "movie night" in **Wet Earth and Warm People**. From the moment the election results come in and it becomes increasingly obvious that Springate will retain his seat, Rubbo shows us a riding that, like an island, is lost in an ocean that it doesn't understand. While the Parti Québécois victory is happening around them, it is an event that like in *Alice in Wonderland* is happening 'out there somewhere'. Television sets in the background of party headquarters reveal the extent of the PQ win, but nobody really watches them, their attention is focused on the immediate fate of their riding. Springate's vindictive and unforgiving victory speech is intercut with Levesque's highly emotional appearance in the Paul Sauvé arena, again shown only on the television sets, as if one step removed from reality. Yet the English 'reality', symbolized for generations simply by the name Westmount, is sad, confused and lost – detached from its surrounding environment by a force that it seems unwilling to comprehend.

Rubbo has found it necessary to turn away from the exotic and disparate locales of his earlier films, but **I Hate to Lose** shows that the Canadian experience at this moment will give him much food for thought. □

Footnotes

1. Bill Nichols: "Documentary Theory and Practice", *Screen* Winter 1976/77, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 34-38.
2. Ibid. p. 37-38, The two basic modes of address, direct and indirect, define whether or not the viewer is explicitly acknowledged as the subject to which the film is addressed.
3. Ibid. p. 44.
4. Dispatch was an independent wire service set up by a group of young Americans as an alternative to UPI and AP.
5. Dave Jones: "The Man in the Picture," *Lumiere*, April 1973, p. 14.

Sad Song of Yellow Skin



Children, briefly safe from the war, on the Island of Peace — Vietnam, 1969.



A woman picks lice out of her son's hair in a Saigon doorway.



On an island in the Mekong delta, the Coconut monk conducts his symbolic war with handgrenade apples and palm-leaf mortars.

Wet Earth and Warm People



Cameraman Leach has lost his enthusiasm. The raft is going under and Jakarta is still 2 days away.

Filmography

- 1966 Long Haul Men
The Bear and the Mouse
- 1967 Adventures
That Mouse
- 1968 Sir! Sir!
- 1969 Mrs. Ryan's Drama Class
- 1970 Here's to Harry's Grandfather!
Sad Song of Yellow Skin
- 1971 Summer's Nearly Over
Wet Earth and Warm People
Persistent and Finagling
- 1972 OK...Camera
- 1973 Jalen, Jalen
Streets of Saigon
The Man Who Can't Stop
- 1974 Waiting for Fidel
- 1975 I'm an Old Tree
- 1976 Log House
- 1977 The Walls Come Tumbling Down
I Hate to Lose



Lunch with the chief of police before rehearsing the Hawaiian songs.



Hussein explains the decorations on the back of his betcha: a bunch of feathers and a quivering reflector to ward off police.

ORGANIZATIONS

ACTRA

Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists

105 Carlton Street, Toronto,
Ontario M5B 1M2 Tel.: 363-6335

One of the most positive and encouraging events on the CBC front (and we use that term advisedly) in recent months has been the establishment of the Council of Broadcast Unions, under the aegis of the Canadian Labour Congress. The Council consists of unions with collective agreements with the CBC — and all with problems with the CBC. ACTRA, the Canadian Wire Service Guild, CUPE, NABET and Union des Artistes are all members of the Council.

On the 8th of September (co-incidentally concurrent with the CBC's attempt to require ACTRA members to work with a U.S. singer who had been refused an ACTRA work permit), the Council met in Ottawa, all the unions being represented. After a prior meeting at the CLC offices, the twelve-member delegation met with Guy Coderre, CBC Vice-President, Peter Russell, Manager of Talent Relations and other senior CBC management personnel. It was obvious that the Corporation was far from happy to see the united, and grim, collective group on the other side of the board table.

Paul Siren, General Secretary of ACTRA, who was delegated by the group to make the opening statement on behalf of all the unions, told the CBC that they had accomplished something which could not have been done by anyone else — the formation of a united front of CBC unions. (It was obvious that this was an accomplishment of which the corporation would not boast!)

Each of the unions has different, but similar, problems with the CBC. The basic point made by them to CBC management was that management had abrogated their right to manage. Specifically, management negotiates Agreements with the various unions, but then allows CBC producers to disregard these Agreements and to operate as if the Agreements do not exist. In some cases the unions have been advised by producers that they intend to breach terms of the Agreements and that if the union is not prepared to go along with the abrogations of their rights, they can invoke the terms of the grievance procedures, procedures which can take many months, by which time the program involved has been broadcast.

The response of CBC management could not be described as encouraging. They agreed to investigate and respond officially to the Council.

It is hoped that the Corporation will recognize how important the Council of Broadcast Unions is likely to be in the future relationships of all the unions with the CBC.

Each union has a certain amount of strength in its relationship with the CBC, but that strength is limited. When five unions combine, these individual strengths are multiplied by much more than five.

Margaret Collier

CFTA

Canadian Film and Television Association

55 York St., suite 512
Toronto, Ont. M5J 1S2
(416) 363-8374

The fifth annual awards of the Canadian Film & Television Association are to be presented this year at a luncheon to be held Friday, October 28, 1977 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Toronto.

Guest speaker and participant in the presentations will be Harry J. Boyle, retiring chairman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

In announcing the date for the 1977 awards, Gunter Henning, president of the Canadian Film and Television Association (CFTA), said that he expected a large number of entries again this year. "Interest seems to be high", said Mr. Henning, "and this indicates that our part of the Canadian motion picture industry is alive and well and looks forward to the annual CFTA awards as a showcase for its sponsored, industrial films and videotape productions". "After all", said Henning, "ours is the only part of the industry which pays its own way by selling its production expertise as an effective communications medium to clients in industry and government".

Michael Smith, chairman of this year's event, has stated he is encouraged by the number of entries received to date and he expects many more will be received by the post-marked closing date of September 2, 1977. Interest in the awards luncheon this year is increased because of Mr. Boyle's participation. "So far as we know, this will be Mr. Boyle's first address to any part of the communications industry after he steps down as chairman of the CRTC in mid-September, and his comments are anticipated with great interest," said Smith.

Government film-making bodies will not be eligible in the competition. But produc-

tions made for government bodies by private producers or those which are co-produced by the private and government sectors will be. Each entry must have been produced between July 1, 1976 and June 30, 1977.

Categories in the competition are: public relations; sales promotion; travel and recreation; nature and wildlife; sports; educational & instructional; TV information and public affairs. There will also be a special "Best film of the year" award. Both French-language and English-language films, or any other language for that matter, may be entered, as long as they meet the basic criteria.

Craft awards will also be given in the following categories: direction; cinematography; script; editing; sound; and musical score.

Entry forms may be obtained from Michael Smith, Chairman, Canadian Film & Television Association 1977 Awards, 410 Adelaide St. W. Toronto, Ontario, tel: (416) 363-4987 or from the Association office.

John Teeter

CMPDA

Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association

1 Yonge St., suite 2207
Toronto, Ont. M5E 1E5
(416) 366-9266

The Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association held their Annual Meeting on September 8th in Toronto and is pleased to announce the election of the following officers:

President: George Heiber, United Artists Corp. Ltd. Vice-President: William Soady, Universal Films (Canada) Ltd. Treasurer: Irving Stern, Warner Brothers (Canada) Ltd. Chairman, Classification and Censorship Committee: Michael Stevenson, Astral Films Ltd.

Jeanne Ritter



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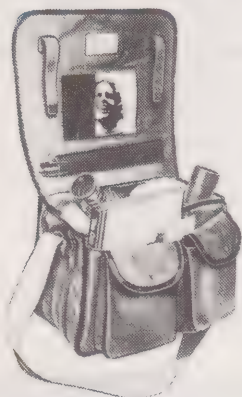
The following are recent developments at the Motion Picture Institute of Canada.

The MPIC has 5 new members: Budge Crawley, André Link, Eric Till, Pierre David and Fil Fraser. Bill Marsden (President of Alberta Motion Picture Ind. Assoc.) will participate in an ex-officio capacity.

An executive committee recommendation to appoint Pierre David as vice-president was presented to all members at the September 15th meeting. Unanimous approval was given to the recommendation and Mr. David assumes his position on the Executive Committee immediately.

We are presently preparing a schedule and contents for the Canadian Film Industry Seminar, and a list of Canadian producers and directors who will be invited to attend the seminar.

George Ritter



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MOTION PICTURES AND TELEVISION AROUND THE WORLD

Sometimes we become so preoccupied with advances in film and television here at home that we fail to realize the extent of technical developments in other countries. The Progress Report published each year by the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers gives a comprehensive overview of what is going on in these industries around the world. The 1976 report, in the May issue of the Journal, tells us, for example, that the Government of India has established a Film and Television Institute to provide professional training for Indian and foreign students. A 21-acre campus at Pune has three viewing theatres, 35mm and 16mm laboratories, a large scenic workshop and properties department in the Film Wing, while the Television Wing includes two production studios, a presentation studio with master control room, VTR and telecine rooms, maintenance shop, graphic and design area, sound dubbing and editing facilities. The Institute has a library with 16,000 books on cinema, television and the arts, as well as a film and tape library of Indian and foreign classics and television programs. This is claimed to be the best training centre for film and television in the world today. At the recent UNESCO conference in Nairobi, it was proposed to upgrade the Institute to a regional centre for training in filmmaking for Afro-Asian countries.

The big event of 1976 for the European Broadcasting Union was the television coverage of the Olympic Games in Montreal. Two trans-Atlantic satellite circuits were leased for the duration of the Games, one for multilateral transmission fed from an earth station at Cote des Neiges, and

the other for individual requests transmission routed through an earth station at Mill Village. Reception in Europe was shared between six earth stations. In all, more than 133 hours of multilateral transmissions and 333 request transmissions were supplied to Europe.

Altogether, 20 countries, members of the European Broadcasting Union, are transmitting in color. Only Greece, Malta, Portugal and Turkey have monochrome facilities. West Germany has three TV networks with a total of 4635 transmitters. France is next with three program services and 1236 transmitters. In the United Kingdom BBC 1 and ITV broadcast 86.5 hours per week each, while BBC 2 is on the air 65 hours a week. The number of color receivers in the UK is estimated at 8,500,000.

Japan has a dual television system, with NHK, the national service, covering the entire country, and commercial broadcasters operating in limited service areas. NHK is financed through receiver fees and the commercial broadcasters through income from advertising. NHK has two program services – general and educational. The general service has 2369 transmitters and the educational service 2321. Commercial broadcasting includes 91 companies operating 2095 stations. The Japanese have nearly 23 million color receivers.

Japan is very active also in the development of motion picture equipment. Fourteen new super 8 cameras are listed in the Progress Report. One of them, developed by the Elmo Co. has automatic focusing. Ten 16mm and super 8 projectors are described also. The Japan Victor Co. announced a new automatic projector for television service. It operates with two projection mechanisms from a cartridge supply/discharge unit in which the films are packaged. This equipment is designed to automatically cycle commercials from 5 to 90 seconds in length, by alternate operation of the projection mechanisms. The machine holds 10 maga-

zines, each accommodating 10 commercials, or a total of 100. The commercials are loaded into the magazines in the order scheduled for broadcast, but random access is possible also.

A prototype machine was shown to me by the designers during a visit to Tokyo in 1975. After the operation of the equipment had been described, they invited me to press the start button. This initiated a wondrous automatic cycling action in which a commercial in its cartridge was taken from a magazine, the film was threaded, the projection mechanism snapped shut, and projection of the film started. At the end of the commercial, a special tail end leader spliced on the film gave a cueing signal reversing the threading operation – the projection mechanism was opened, the film was rewound into its cartridge and replaced in its magazine.

To give a continuous operation, the second commercial in the broadcasting schedule is threaded into the second projector mechanism while the first commercial is running, and then put into a stand-by mode awaiting a signal from the end leader on the first commercial to start the next part of the cycle.

In Egypt, a Cine-City complex is being built by the Egyptian General Organization, a government agency, to raise the overall standards of motion picture production. Construction was started in 1966 but is not yet completed. During 1976, seventy feature films were produced in color.

A recently opened Euro Filmcenter in the Netherlands has four theatres, three of which are located side by side with a common projection booth. The projectors have interlock motors, and a 35mm print can be shown simultaneously in all three theatres. The Dutch NV Philips Department ELA Cinema at Eindhoven had developed jointly with Firma Knoton of Munich, a 35mm projector incorporating the Kinoton Cross by which the intermittent drive for the pull-

*Long time Supervisor of Technical Film Operations at the programming centre of the CBC, Mr. Ross is the author of two books, **Television Film Engineering** and **Color Film for Color Television**, has won the Agfa-Gevaert Gold Medal, awarded by the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, and is presently chairman of the SMPTE Board of Editors.*

TECH NEWS

down sprocket can be de-activated, while at the same time a continuous drive system is put into operation. This allows forward or reverse motion of the film at speeds up to 120 frames/sec. The machine changes over automatically to single-frame projection when it is stopped, allowing the film to be moved backwards or forwards one frame at a time.

In Southeast Asia, activity was greatest in Indonesia where the government has set a target of 500 national productions a year. Once this target is reached, importation of films will be reduced or stopped altogether.

These are just a few of the highlights from a Progress Report crammed with interesting facts and figures. The Progress Committee, chaired by Robert Smith of Du Art Film Labs, New York, and executive vice-president of the Society, has 60 members around the world, from Aboghasen Rezai in Iran to Peter Seow in Singapore. Canadians on the Progress Committee are Hellmut Berger, Charles Kirkman, R.A. McKinstrey, and Arnold Schieman.

Since its inception in 1916, the Society has grown to over 7,500 members in 60 countries around the world, and the Society's Journal has gained a special status as the pre-eminent publication in the fields of motion pictures and television.

EQUIPMENT NEWS

Note to Canadian distributors: We would like to include the names and addresses of Canadian distributors of equipment and services mentioned in this section. Please ask your suppliers to give Canadian sources in their publicity releases. Ed.

Film Gate Photometer

The Pioneer Marketing Corp., 1021 North Lake St., Burbank, Calif., has announced their new Peterson "Cor-Jr." Probe for use with the Spectra Film Gate Photometer. This impor-

tant new photometric tool measures the track-to-track uniformity of the four super 8 printing tracks on the Peterson Cor-Jr. continuous optical reduction printer. It also permits the operator to measure the level of illumination in each of the super 8 tracks, eliminating time-consuming film tests and waste footage.

Visual Communications

Rutherford, the visual communications specialist, with offices in Vancouver, Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa and Montreal, is putting out a new publication, "Focus on Communication". In the Summer 1977 (No. 2) issue, Ken Rutherford, president, says that we remember 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see and 50% of what we see and hear. This makes the audio-visual image one of the most significant tools in teaching, training or selling. Two new audio-visual systems are described in this issue - one in the Royal Bank Plaza in downtown Toronto, and the other in the United Catholic Presbyterian Worship Centre in Don Mills.

News from F&B/CECO

The Government of Argentina is building six new ultra-modern television studios in Buenos Aires. After competitive bidding among lighting equipment manufacturers in the USA and five foreign countries, the exclusive contract was awarded to Bardwell-McAlister of Hollywood, a subsidiary of F&B/Ceco. The total lighting equipment contract was for US \$1,088,000. The equipment has to be manufactured, delivered and installed before the end of 1977 when Argentina is to be the host for the World Cup Soccer matches.

Animation Camera Motors

Alan Gordon Enterprises Inc., 5362 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, Calif., has acquired the tooling and inventory of National Cine Equipment animation motors. NCE animation motors are constructed of cast aluminum and designed to give years of trouble-free service. Motors are available for most professional motion picture cameras including Arriflex 16, Bolex, Mitchell, Bell & Howell 2709, Mitchell 16, Arriflex 35, Eastman Reflex, Cine Special, Maurer, Filmo 70, Eyemo and Mitchell Reflex 35.

Dreamland II

The NFB/CBC/Great Canadian Moving Picture Co. are co-producing a sequel to **Dreamland** with the working title **Dreamland II**. This feature length documentary on the history of the Canadian film industry will cover the period from 1939 to 1953. John Kramer (editor of **Dreamland** and co-director of **Under the Volcano**) is the director; Kirwan Cox is the producer; Mike McKennirey is the executive producer; and research is being undertaken by Piers Handling, Maynard Collins, and Pierre Veronneau. Television broadcast is set for the fall, 1978.

During this period Odeon Theatres was established to challenge Famous Players; NFB films became world famous, as evidenced by the Oscars which **Churchill's Island** and **Neighbours** won; drive-in theatres were started; Hollywood convinced the Canadian government to trade box office revenue for references in American movies under the "Canadian Cooperation Project"; Quebec cinema really began with religious melodramas which remain among the most successful commercial features made in Canada; the "Red Scare" intimidates the NFB and staff are fired; Duplessis prohibits NFB films in Quebec schools; the Massey Commission studies film in Canada without a glance at the commercial theatres and recommends the CBC develop television; and much more.

This is an incredibly influential era in Canadian film history. We would like to hear from anyone with personal knowledge of the events of these years or anyone who has any documentation such as letters, photographs, or films. We would also like to locate Paul Nathanson. We need this information by the first of the year when we hope our research will be completed. If you can help, please contact: **Kirwan Cox, 132 Walmer Road, Toronto, Ont.**

FILM VS. TAPE CONTROVERSY

We have received the following letter in response to the Rough Cut column in issue no. 38/39.

I have been a constant reader of your publication because I consider **Cinema Canada** one of the finest quality magazines in our industry. This, in spite of the fact that I have frequently winced at some of the wilder and more reckless ruminations of Robert Rouveroy.

I guess it was inevitable that I would be the next victim of Mr. Rouveroy's irresponsible journalism when I dared voice my convictions regarding the film/tape controversy at a combined SMPTE/CSC meeting in Toronto this past April.

While I do grant Mr. Rouveroy the journalistic license to characterize my speech as a "violent diatribe," I will not accept with calm equanimity his lies, distortions, and his attacks upon my integrity! His slanders are particularly offensive and inexcusable because a printed version of my speech was available and distributed to the audience that evening.

I did not, for example, claim that tape, per se, was more expensive than film. What I did point out was that Jim Kitchell, general manager of news services at NBC News, made the statement at the RTNDA conference in Miami last December that, at NBC News, they found no appreciable difference in overall operating expenses between film and tape. I added further, that we subsequently learned that at NBC, ENG operational costs run as much as 17% higher than with the use of newsfilm.

Again, Mr. Rouveroy is entitled to characterize my observation that 16mm newsfilm looks better than ENG on network news broadcasts as "rather idiotic," but I still insist that any objective observer would agree that, because of the limitations of the 1/4" U-Matic cassette tape recorders that are being used, ENG cameras are still not realizing their full quality potential on network news broadcasts.

What I most bitterly resented, of course, was the implication that the views I was presenting were a self-serving attempt on my part to overcome the fact that, as Mr. Rouveroy put it, "ENG was cutting sharply into his sales figures." I don't know where he is coming from, but I would certainly like Mr. Rouveroy to know where I am coming from.

I have been an electronic engineer all my adult life, and the strength of my company has been its ability to apply advanced electronic technology to the solving of problems in the motion picture industry. We have a whole history of innovative electronic devices such as crystal-controlled motors, servo zoom controls, etc., and a broad range of experience in the application of video techniques. So, for example, we required a high resolution ultrabright monitor for Steadicam, and since none existed, we designed and built it from the ground up.

Far from being anti-ENG, we are firmly committed to its proper and healthy integration in a balanced news gathering system. In fact, we are currently developing a low cost film-to-tape transfer unit that will further enhance the compatibility of the two mediums.

Mr. Rouveroy might be interested to know, for example, that Steven Smith, of whom he speaks in the same article, purchased his TK-76 from us. We are now in the second year of an exclusive marketing arrangement with RCA, whereby we distribute the extremely fine TK-76 camera mainly as part of our Steadicam system. The Dorothy Hamill Special that was shot in Montreal, for example, used two TK-76's with Steadicam that we supplied. We are entering into a similar arrangement to distribute the new, most up-to-date NEC ENG camera in North America as well.

As for my financial worries, I wish to set Mr. Rouveroy's mind at ease by pointing out that in 1976, the year in which ENG had its major impact, our sales increased by approximately 15%. And in 1977 we expect a further healthy increase of at least 10% — to reach a record annual sales level of over \$10,000,000!

This is a far cry from the "poor Mr. DiGiulio" Rouveroy describes.

Even when discussing something as remarkable and innovative as Steadicam, Rouveroy still manages to muck it up with errors and distortions. While I take vigorous exception to some of the comparisons he makes between Steadicam and Panaglide, I would consider it inappropriate for me to make negative references to a competitive product, and so I decline to comment. Suffice it to say that, contrary to his comments regarding the lack of a patent, had Mr. Rouveroy paid attention during the question-and-answer period, he would have heard me make the statement, in reply to a direct question from the audience, that Steadicam had received a U.S. patent just a few days prior to the meeting, and that we were taking appropriate legal actions to protect the patent from possible infringement.

To demand a formal apology from Mr. Rouveroy would perhaps dignify his remarks too much. I am concerned, however, that my reputation has been damaged. And so, in fairness to me and to your readers, I do request that you reproduce my speech so that your readers can decide for themselves on the validity of my remarks concerning the film/tape controversy — an issue which is so important to our industry.

As for Mr. Rouveroy who thinks that by throwing himself slavishly prone before the altar of technology he can appear to be a "with it," or "now" person, I think I will send him a couple of rubber bands and \$39.95 so he can try to make his own Steadicam, or whatever.

Ed DiGiulio
President
Cinema Products Corporation

The text which follows is made of excerpts of Mr. DiGiulio's address. We leave it to our readers to judge the issues at hand. And we thank Mr. DiGiulio for writing to us. Ed.

While electronic journalism — in the broadest, fullest meaning of the term — has been in existence from the very inception of television news, providing live coverage of important, meaningful news events, political conventions, Senate hearings, sporting events, etc., the tumultuous events of the 60's in the U.S. and abroad clearly indicated that new tools for news gathering were now called for to provide proper on-the-spot coverage from all parts of the world.

News events seemed to be moving at an ever faster pace, and the public interest in television news had grown to the extent that news programs were now expanded in terms of duration and the type of coverage offered.

These new requirements for television news were clearly not being met by the studio-type television cameras available at the time, nor by the assortment of bulky and clumsy 16mm film cameras (mostly conversions of the Auricon Cine-voice camera) used by TV-news cameramen until the early 70's.

What was called for was a new type of camera to provide extreme portability and maneuverability under difficult field conditions. A camera that would permit the news cameraman to really capture news events as they were unfolding!

Two new revolutionary tools for news gathering for television were developed in response to these needs, from different but equally valid premises. One was the first truly self-contained lightweight newsfilm camera, the CP-16, designed and manufactured by Cinema Products Corporation. And the other was the portable electronic camera, the minicam, developed by Ikegami under the sponsorship of CBS.

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The so-called "ENG Era" was not born until May 7, 1974, when a CBS Ikegami electronic camera was conveniently available to cover the SLA Shootout in Los Angeles that fortuitously occurred during prime time television!

The dramatic significance of that event was that, for the first time, a television camera could be rushed to the scene of action and relay a live picture back to the station for immediate on-line transmission to the television sets in the living rooms of viewers throughout America. Understandably, the excitement caused by this event stimulated television network management to press for the development of smaller and lighter weight ENG-type television cameras to make electronic news gathering an even more viable and practical technique.

While we at Cinema Products, with our heavy commitment to advanced technology (especially electronic technology), applauded the achievements of our colleagues who design video cameras, we were appalled at the hoopla and ballyhoo with which network management has heralded the dawn of a new era of all-electronic journalism in the U.S.

For the past several years, we have been subjected to a barrage of rash and often preposterous claims on the relative merits and advantages of video cameras over film cameras, frequently defying all logic and economic common sense, leading one to wonder whether these proponents of ALL-ENG lack indeed the courage of their own convictions, and therefore hope to carry the day by press agency and hyperbole rather than performance.

Out of touch with reality, some network executives have even fantasized a Brave New World-type of situation, where news-as-it-happens will be intercut, live, at regular intervals throughout the day, much like the commercials that interrupt all programs.

The trade journals that service (and sometimes pander to) the television industry have taken up the same hue and cry, and we are inundated month after month with testimonials on the marvels of this new television news gathering technique... totally ignoring the important contributions of newsfilm.

All this despite the fact that the new ENG cameras, while smaller and portable enough to give them almost (and I underline the word "almost") as much flexibility as a 16mm newsfilm camera, they are by no means as rugged and reliable as a newsfilm camera, and there is still a great deal of ancillary equipment such as recorders, power packs, etc. that must be carried about, which severely limits their ability to move and set-up rapidly.

To counter this propaganda, Cinema Products recently ran a series of "Open Letter" ads in these same TV trade publications to point out the invalidity of most of the claims made by the proponents of an ALL-ENG philosophy. (Reprints of these ads, by the way, are available on request...)

One of our "Open Letters" refuted the fallacious claim that going ALL-ENG would result in great economic savings, compared with film.

And at the recent Radio and Television News Directors Association convention held in Miami, it was indeed gratifying to hear Jim Kitchell, General Manager, News Services, NBC News, confirm our observations regarding the relative costs of ENG versus film. Without taking into account the original capital expenditures, which are many times greater for ENG equipment than for film, Kitchell indicated that there was no appreciable difference in operating expenses between film and tape. (We have subsequently learned that, at NBC, ENG operational costs run as much as 17% higher than news-

film! Quite an appreciable difference, I would think.)

One fascinating comment Kitchell made was that for network news, their policy is to never re-use their tape cassettes, since the many passes the tape receives in the editing process sufficiently degrades the quality so that they would not want to use it again in the field! So much for the so-called enormous savings involved in reusable tape!

In light of Mr. Kitchell's remarks regarding operating expenses of ENG equipment and the non-reusability of tape cassettes, I asked why was he charging ahead with total ENG for network news?

According to Mr. Kitchell, the answer could be summed up in four important letters: T-I-M-E.

Mr. Kitchell, of course, was not referring to the capability of ENG cameras to relay live coverage from the scene of action directly to the station for immediate transmission to the viewers at home - initially ENG's main *raison d'être*! Because, by their own admission, all networks, affiliates and independent TV stations now recognize that 99.999% of the news shot during the day is not sufficiently important to interrupt soap operas, game shows and reruns of old movies that clutter the air waves during daytime viewing hours.

But so strong is the innate pro-electronic bias of network management, so great their distaste for film, that no sooner is one of their pro-ENG barrage balloons shot down in flames than they proceed to launch yet another!

Mr. Kitchell's main argument now is that even if a story is not put on the air live, transmitting it from the ENG van to the station for recording and editing still saves time, because the crew is then free to continue covering more stories.

Frankly, we do not quite follow the logic of this argument. As we all know, conditions are frequently not suitable for microwave transmission to the station, and ENG crews often must send their recorded video tape to the station by courier... just like any newsfilm crew. Furthermore, considering the costs of one complete ENG camera outfit plus van and transmission equipment, one could easily equip twenty individual newsfilm journalists - operating one-man-band style - each with his own modern, self-contained newsfilm sound camera. And most assuredly, they could cover far more news stories than any one two-man ENG crew plus van could possibly cover during the course of a day.

In addition, experience with ENG over the past two years has demonstrated that, more often than not, the extreme portability and flexibility of a modern newsfilm camera has provided the coverage on a fast-moving, fastbreaking story - coverage that was presumed to be the sole province of ENG equipment - beating ENG crews to the punch time and time again.

Such was the case when Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme attempted to assassinate President Ford in Sacramento, and such was the case when the Chowchilla children kidnapping story broke. And, of course, there are many less dramatic instances that could also be cited.

Finally, there is the claim that the picture quality put out by ENG cameras already exceeds that achieved by 16mm newsfilm, and is almost, in fact, indistinguishable from 35mm film when both are viewed on the home television screen.

For any of you who have watched network news broadcasts which are heavily loaded with ENG stories, I need not point out what pure hokum there is in this contention. I have yet to see a network news broadcast in which there were not several ENG stories that exhibited various forms of image degradation such as color shift, lack of color saturation, loss of definition, poor color balance, etc.

The truth is that the main arguments in favor of going ALL-ENG for television news gathering are patently invalid:

Going ALL-ENG does not save money!

ENG does not improve picture quality!

ENG does not increase the total number of different news stories covered!

And more often than not, ENG does not provide the live immediacy for fast-breaking news stories that have not been carefully pre-planned and set-up!

Why then does network management persist in going ALL-ENG for television news?

Could it be that the unconscionably high profits the networks have raked up in the past few years make it possible for them to disregard all economic sense (as well as their fiduciary responsibility to their stockholders) and indulge their inherent pro-electronic bias by going on a total ENG binge?!

While we recognize ENG as an important new tool with a very valid role in an overall, balanced, news gathering operation, the fact is that for most news gathering purposes, newsfilm provides the most efficient and economical answer.

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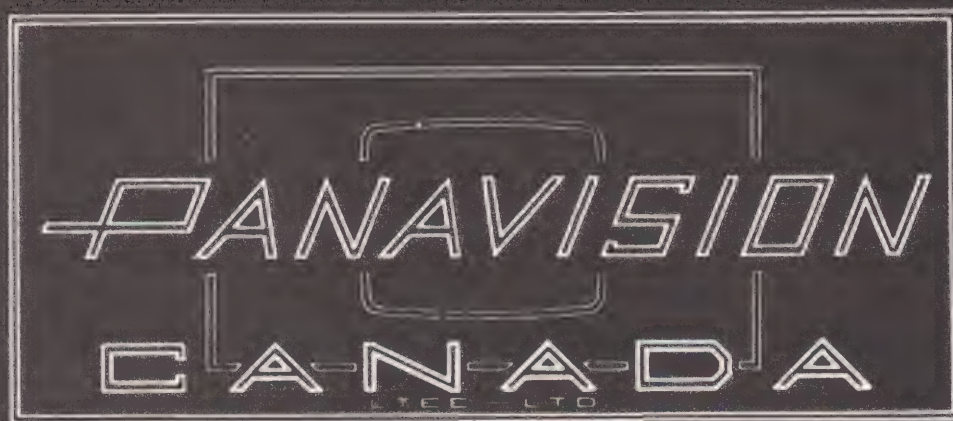
In conclusion, let me stress that while we recognize the valid role that ENG can play in gathering news for television, newsfilm is, and will continue to be, the backbone of any balanced, rational television news operation.

However, when it comes to the production of TV specials and commercials, documentaries, dramas and theatrical features - where visual impact and production values are of primary importance - film simply can't be beat!

Film is the most versatile and cost-effective medium.

Film is the quality medium!

Ed DiGiulio



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FILM REVIEWS

Peter Carter's

Rituals

d: Peter Carter, **sc:** Ian Sutherland, **ph:** René Verzier, **ed:** George Appleby, **sd:** Douglas Canton, **m:** Hagood Hardy, **l.p.:** Hal Holbrook (Harry), Lawrence Dane (Mitzi), Robin Gammell (Martin), Ken James (Abel), Gary Reineke (D.J.), **exec. p.:** Harold Greenberg and Robert A. Kantor, **p:** Lawrence Dane, **p.c.:** Astral Bellevue Pathé Limited and Canart Films Limited, 1976, **col:** 35 mm, **dist:** Astral Films, **running time:** 100 min.

A few years ago, Mayor Jean Drapeau decided to push through a bylaw banning newspaper vending machines from the sidewalks as part of his continuing program to make Montreal celestial. He felt they were an eyesore. Considering the decrepit state of much of the city, the local television news people found the whole thing screamingly funny and put together a little five minute item *à la* Drapeau. The film consisted of shot panning past scrap yards, garbage dumps and smoke stacks, accompanied by sweet flowery music intercut with short shots zooming into the offending newspaper machines with loud jarring discords on the soundtrack. **Rituals** has about the same cinematic subtlety. The only way you know it is a horror movie is because of a couple of zooms, accompanied by a chord of scary music. The rest is a banal adventure story with bad acting, bad dialogue and bad music, all precariously balanced on a shaky and unoriginal plot.

Five doctors on a camping trip are flown into the middle of the wilderness. On arrival they are all bubbly and frothy in an atmosphere with the same gripping intensity of those beer commercials on television (you know the ones with Harry and the boys getting together for some weekend fishing and someone falls in the water).



The end of a hard day in **Rituals**

After about half an hour of this yuk-yuk merriment, there are a couple of zoom shots and loud chords and the doctors start getting chopped up by a nasty in the woods. If you think zoom shots of disembodied heads on a stake is too trite, think again.

From the very start, **Rituals** was a risky venture. You can get away with a mediocre dramatic film but if you make a comedy, it had better be funny, and if you attempt a horror film, it had better be scary. The Saturday night audience with which I saw the film collectively gasped only twice in the hour and a half. Someone screamed, but it was in the wrong place. There are several ways you can unnerve people; my favorite is *à la* Hitchcock where the world goes slightly askew, as in a distorting mirror. People like Corman don't bother with this subtlety, and are content to keep the screen liberally splashing with gore. This film halfheartedly attempts both and, except for one or two moments near the beginning, achieves neither. Added into the pot is the last refuge of a desperate screenwriter — symbolism. The river they are travelling is

haunted with Indian legends that have "a beginning and an end and that's the middle", whatever that's supposed to mean. For the Jungians among us, there are lots of snake crosses and animal entrails flashed around the screen.

Unfortunately, no amount of cerebral icing can cover up the emptiness of the script. The film is technically competent, in parts even slick, but the sad fact is that we just don't give a damn about these guys, much less about what's happening to them. Halfway through the film we are made aware that one of the doctors is a good guy, and one is just cut to save his own skin, and we find out that somebody's father had a drinking problem. The trouble is that this introduction of human content is almost a screenwriting afterthought and it comes too little, too crudely and too late. That is really the major problem with the film; all of the thin action rests on the crudely portrayed characters. You end up not caring about the protagonists, not identifying with them and it's game over; no drama, no horror, no film.

Ronald Blumer

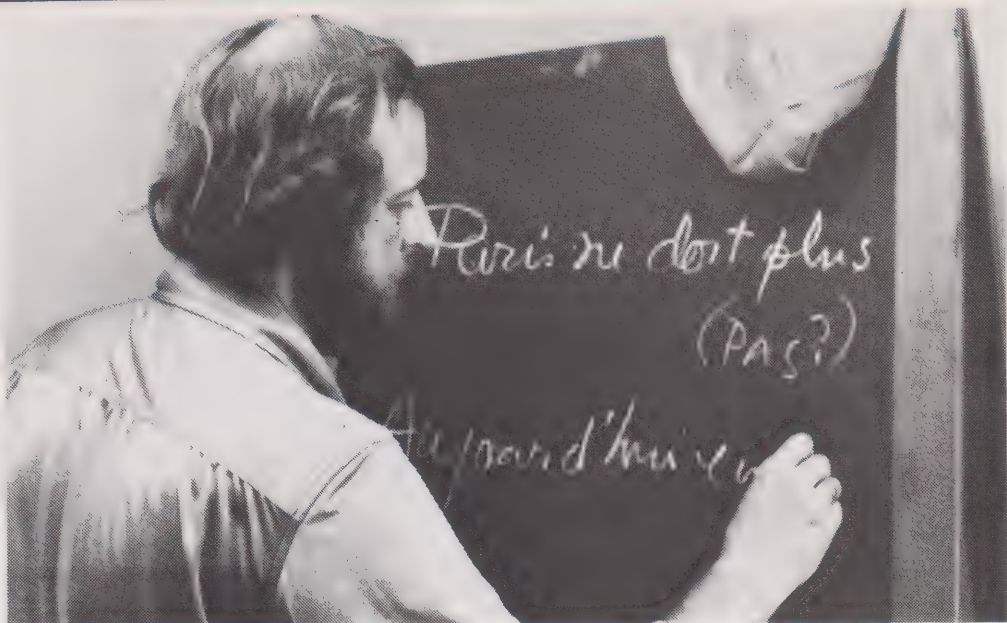
Film Credit Abbreviations: d.: Director, asst. d.: Assistant Director, sc.: Script, adapt.: Adaptation, dial.: Dialogue, ph.: Photography, sp. ph. eff.: Special Photographic Effects, ed.: Editor, sup. ed.: Supervising Editor, sd.: Sound, sd. ed.: Sound Editor, sd. rec.: Sound Recording, p. des.: Production Designer, a.d.: Art Director, set dec.: Set Decorator, m.: Music, m.d.: Music Director, cost.: Costumes, choreo.: Choreography, l.p.: Leading Players, exec. p.: Executive Producer, p.: Producer, assoc. p.: Associate Producer, p. sup.: Production Supervisor, p. man.: Production Manager, p.c.: Production Company, col.: Colour Process, dist.: Distributors, narr.: Narration.

FILM REVIEWS

Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's

Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort

d: Jean-Pierre Lefebvre, **asst. d:** Alain Maline, **sc:** Lefebvre and Mireille Amiel, **ph:** Guy Dufaux, **ed:** Marguerite Duparc, **sd:** Jacques Blain, **m:** Claude Fonfrède, **cost:** Nicole Rachline, **i.p.:** Marcel Sabourin (Abel), Anouk Ferjac (Anne), Myriam Boyer (Jeanne), **exec. p.:** Jean-Henri Deleau, **p:** Marguerite Duparc-Lefebvre and Hubert Niogret, **p.c.:** Cinak (Mtl), Filmoblic (Paris), 1976, **col:** 35mm, **running time:** 113 min.



Abel in Paris

Jean-Pierre Lefebvre's new film **Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort** was shown in Montreal recently at the Quebec critics' festival (Le Festival international du film de la critique québécoise). And though the audience jumped up after the screening to sing "Gens du Pays" to Lefebvre, "*Mon cher Jean-Pierre, c'est à ton tour de te laisser parler d'amour*" (My dear Jean-Pierre, it's your turn now to be spoken to of love, — the unofficial Quebec nationalist anthem)*. I left the theatre feeling essentially isolated. Charmed by some moments in the film and by its zealous and sincere reception, but estranged from the emotions behind that reception.

For what Lefebvre had managed to do with this film was to create a character, who, by the simple discovery of what he is not, politically and culturally, is instilled with a sense of political and cultural affirmation. That affirmation of the Quebecois sensibility becomes the central statement of the film; experiencing it demands a leap of faith which I, for one, could not make, personally.

To be fair to Lefebvre, who has shown himself sternly committed to the New Quebec, this film is not a mere exploitation of the ripening political atmosphere since the November '76 election. The central character of this film, Abel, was introduced to Quebec audiences a decade ago in **Il ne faut pas mourir pour ça**.

*It should be added that "Gens du Pays" has also officiously replaced "Bonne Fête", the French version of "Happy Birthday". The film was screened on Lefebvre's birthday.

Whereas the early film, the first in a trilogy of which **Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est mort** is the second film, looks at Abel through a Quebec context, in this film Abel travels to France to discover what is tangible and explicit about having roots in that nation, "*s'il y a encore des français en France et s'ils nous ressemblent*" (whether there are any French in France and whether we are like them), but being something other.

In Paris, where the film opens (it was shot entirely in France), we find the mild mannered Abel (Marcel Sabourin) doing those things tourists in Paris do, "sitting" for a portrait by one of the street artists, taking coffee in a bistro, visiting the flower market.

He meets Jeanne (Myriam Boyer), a young worker saddled with problems: her delinquent brother, her drunken father and her own loneliness — she is a widow. On the Cote d'Azur, where Abel travels when he tires of Paris, he meets Anne (Anouk Ferjac) who, though professionally secure as a child court judge, lives an uneventful life, cut off from her husband and her emotions. (On a Saturday afternoon in Paris, Anne walks the artist's alley where a vendor stares mutely, as if she were the tourist, and she stares back.) The three of them are seen alone, until the script brings them together as friends and, the women, as Abel's lovers.

Describing them now, they seem dry, clichéd characters, and, in one sense, they are meant to be. As outsiders, displaced persons, they lend credence to Lefebvre's disenchantment with modern France. On the other hand, and this is where Lefebvre is at his best, he also shapes these

characters with irony, a bit of humor and much sympathy. (He is aided here by the excellent performances of the three lead actors.) We are never estranged from them but by the way in which they are manipulated.

When Abel purchases flowers from a street vendor and find he hasn't the right change, he takes the whole lot and sits down, smugly, to enjoy them. The chair he and his flowers occupy however must be rented. We see him paying off the good woman with flowers only to be accosted by a police officer who moves in to demand he show his seller's license. The charm of this episode, like many others, erodes quickly when we put it in context.

Lefebvre tries to excuse his lack of balance, his loading of the dice, academically, in terms of post cards. It has all been, says Abel at the end of the film, a large post card "*tout ça pour moi c'est comme une immense carte postale... pis j'nous vois comme sur une immense carte postale...*" (It's all like a huge postcard to me... like we're all on a huge postcard). It isn't real. And if it isn't real then Abel hasn't changed from knowing and loving Jeanne and Anne. The film isn't about people, it's about pawns.

But for all its faults, and I detach myself from them with difficulty, this film has a moody, sultry quality that works on us. Like photos of heat waves rising off the earth, we are held behind a veil of distance and, at the same time, almost tranquillized by being there. Devices which in another film might appear awkward and out of place, such as frequent, intent gazes into the camera, don't mar the serenity of this film.

We are particularly tuned to the nuances of music and light. The music that drifts in through windows is, we discover, sung by a balladeer character who seems to have only one song, a modern *chanson de geste*. It is a convention used rarely in film but it becomes both ironic and humorous in this film as we see the character and listen to his song over and over again.

Lefebvre seems to be exploring a passive posture. In this film it is represented both by the notes that Abel writes himself on a black board, "Paris ne dort plus" (Paris isn't sleeping anymore), he scribbles when he gets up one morning, and by the static camera. This passiveness or distance might be explained only in terms of Abel's being out of himself, out of Quebec, but I think Lefebvre, though there is slight evidence of it in this film, is groping for something deeper. Perhaps he's saving it for the third part of the trilogy, *La mort du père prodigue*, scheduled for shooting sometime next year.

However important *Le vieux pays où Rimbaud est Mort* is to the Quebec Lefebvre knows and cares about, the film falls short of representing more than cultural wounds.

Joan Irving

REVIEWS OF SHORT FILMS

The World of Wizards

d. Pen Densham, John Watson, ph. Robert New, Pen Densham, sc. Pen Densham, James Randi, sd. rec. Richard Nichol, John Megill, Bryan Day, sd. ed. Robert Grieve, Patrick Drummond, p. man. Nancy Falconer, m. John Mills-Cockell, p.c. Insight Productions Inc., 1977, color, 16mm, running time 50 min.

Coming up on CBC television on October 8 is a fascinating look at *The World of Wizards*. No longer the fear-



ed practitioners of obscure diabolical sciences, moulding the powers of life and death, time and space to their whims, today's wizards weave their spells of enchantment to create wonder and delight. Magic is used to entertain and amuse, as well as to intrigue an audience. It is a means by which we rekindle the mysterious wonderment of the child in us whose entire world is woven with the cloth of enchantment.

The World of Wizards fully captures the fascinating subject of professional wizards plying their trade in all of its magical mystery. Two years in the making, this "docutainment", by Toronto's innovative Insight Productions, offers up a strange land peopled by exotic men in long robes and peaked hats, who carry gleaming-eyed cats and speak in the mystical language of the ancients.

The camera takes us on a tour of magic and illusion in North America, from the spooky Magic Castle in Los Angeles where world famous sorcerers come to relax from their labors, to the sombre 50th anniversary Houdini seance in Niagara Falls. The oldest magic store in America is conjured up for us, as is a behind-the-scenes look at a magic factory. We also visit the annual magicians' convention held in the unlikely town of

Colon, Michigan, the Magic Capital of the World.

Throughout the magical hour, we are treated to famous and unknown magicians practising their craft in lavish theatres, in parks, small town squares and on the streets of lower Manhattan — wherever a crowd might gather to stare and wonder. Even the simplest of conjurers gets an enthusiastic round of applause whenever the audience feels mystified. In a sometime harshly real world, an audience craves enchantment. In the faces of the people on the street, you can read this need to believe in magic.

At one point, Canadian wizard Doug Henning sums it all up by saying that when you watch how a great magician moves his hands and how he talks, you finally realize that it is magic you are seeing; magic is everywhere.

Numerous feats of prestidigitiation, levitation, occultism, necromancy, conjuring and manipulation are sprinkled like magic dust throughout the program and it is a singular delight to watch the slick, the humble and the casual magicians of today perform their marvellous craft. But even more engaging is some of the vintage footage discovered by the Insight crew on three continents; footage which shows geniuses of the art such as Harry Blackstone Sr. and the incomparable Harry Houdini, actually performing some of their death defying stunts.

Hosted by the Great Randi, a Canadian magician well versed in the misty world of Wizards, the hour moves along at a delightful clip, never becoming too involved in the technical mechanics of the sorcery craft but preferring to dwell on the light heartedness, the humor and the childlike sense of wonder evoked by magic.

In all, *The World of Wizards* is a marvellous romp through a magic land that boasts some fine old footage of past masters, excellent documentation of modern magicians honing their skills, and a hair raising finale where a modern escape artist is suspended over a frigid Niagara Falls in sub zero weather and attempts to escape from shackles and a strait jacket. This feat, staged especially for the film, took place last February under a heavy blanket of secrecy. The revelation of the mystery escape artist's identity offers us a surprising glimpse into the tremendous abilities of the wizards that move among us.

Günter Ott

FILM REVIEWS



Statistics

Statistics, a Logical Step into the Void

d: G. Philip Jackson, **sc:** Jackson, **ph:** David Lorrigan, **sd:** James Orr, **i.p.:** Carl E. Harvey, **p.c.:** Jackson-Lorrigan Films, 1977, **col.:** black and white, tinted, 16mm, **running time:** 6 minutes.

For six minutes the viewer watches a mauve and purple screen, like an uncorrected TV picture, while a talking head relates what director Jackson describes as an "absolutely rational argument for the most absurd idea."

It's an interesting idea, but it isn't exactly a visual treat.

The talking head of Carl Harvey relentlessly pursues his subject, concerning the relationships of life and death or their non-existence, while we watch, bored and fascinated, as the head slowly becomes larger and larger, until, like a lectured child, we find the words drifting past our unresponsive ears as we examine nostril and whisker, and wonder why the speaker looks off to his left rather than at us.

The argument is framed in an introductory and closing statement of statistics concerning the number of times a cat's back must be stroked in order to generate sufficient electricity to light a bulb. The irrelevance is the point. Even the accompanying shots are irrelevant.

But the point is not well taken.

The film illustrates to a startling degree just how hard it is to translate ideas into film, and how much harder yet to make that succinct, witty, choice comment that's so desired.

Asked about the inspiration for the argument in the film, Jackson replied, "I took two philosophy courses, otherwise there's no way I could have written the script."

He sees it as a tool for classroom use in debunking the debunkers of life: a stimulation for debate on logic and manipulation of language.

Possibly. At any rate it will reintroduce the slow zoom (so effectively used by both Snow and Wieland in early experimental films), and illustrate the technique of producing color effects by printing black and white film on color stock using filters, as well as provide an example of how a simple set-up, some dedication to work, and an idea may be all that is needed to make a little film which after all offers a learning opportunity (as they say) to both audience and artist.

Natalie Edwards

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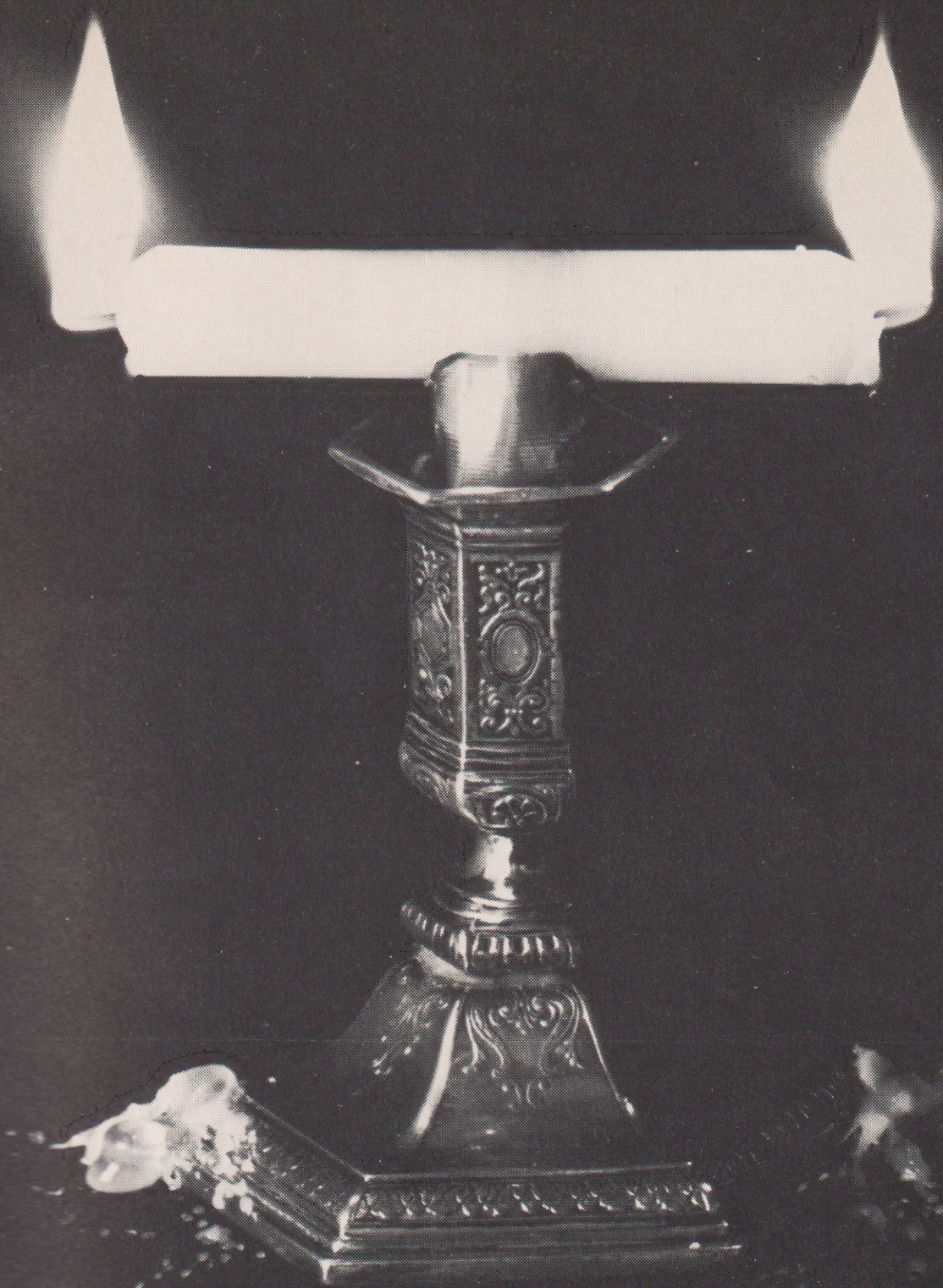
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